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VOLUME 115



MEDIEVAL AND RENAISSANCE HUMANISM

Rhetoric, Representation and Reform

EDITED BY

STEPHEN GERSH AND BERT ROEST



BRILL
LEIDEN · BOSTON
2003

This book is printed on acid-free paper.

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Medieval and renaissance humanism : rhetoric, representation, and reform / edited by Stephen Gersh and Bert Roest.

p. cm. – (Brill's studies in intellectual history, ISSN 0920-8607)

Papers presented at a workshop held Oct. 19-21, 2000 at the Centre for Classical, Oriental, Medieval, and Renaissance Studies of the University of Groningen.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 90-04-13274-0

1. Literature, Medieval–History and criticism–Congresses. 2. European literature–Renaissance, 1450-1600–History and criticism–Congresses. 3. Humanism–Congresses. I. Gersh, Stephen. II. Roest, Bert, 1965- III. Series.

PN663.M39 2003

809'.894'0902–dc21

2003049572

ISSN 0920-8607

ISBN 90 04 13274 0

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PRINTED IN THE NETHERLAND

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INTRODUCTION

From Thursday, 19 October to Saturday, 21 October 2000, the Centre for Classical, Oriental, Medieval and Renaissance Studies (COMERS) of the University of Groningen hosted an international workshop on humanist traditions in the medieval world and its aftermath. It was part of the joint research programme of The Medieval Institute of the University of Notre Dame and the Netherlands Research School for Medieval Studies funded through the University of Notre Dame and The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research. The goal of the workshop was to stimulate interdisciplinary approaches to the study of medieval and Renaissance humanisms by means of analytic, hermeneutic and semiotic methods and to examine the ways in which humanist thought and humanist forms of expression have resounded in post-medieval historiographical and literary projects.

The initial focus of the workshop was to take stock of humanist aspects of medieval intellectual life and thought and of its appropriation by modern history and literature after the seminal works of Colin Morris (*The Discovery of the Individual*, London 1972), and Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (*Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, Cambridge, Mass. 1982). In addition, it tried to seek out new developments, covering a wide range of issues pertaining to intellectual history as an interdisciplinary field of research. Three approaches received special emphasis:

First, attention was given to 1.) (proto-) humanist philosophical orientations (including epistemological stances and the interaction between medieval Platonism and scholastic Aristotelianism) and the language and vocabulary used to frame them, and to 2.) humanist representations of the scholarly enterprise in itself (humanist ideas of scientific method and humanist representations and defences of literature and scholarly disciplines, such as logic, rhetoric, physics, metaphysics, astrology, magic, and medicine).

Secondly, a classic problem in the study of medieval and Renaissance humanism was revisited, namely that of the self-representation of the intellectual and the representation of individuality in humanist literature. Such representations appear to be ideological constructs and attempts at self-fashioning in confrontation with other narratives of

individuality. For this reason, the participants in the workshop concentrated on the language and the semiotic tools used in humanist representations and discussed the meaning of words denoting individuality and the self in past discourses.

Thirdly, the workshop focused on humanism from yet another perspective by examining medieval and Renaissance humanism as an ideological programme of educational, moral, and political reform that not only touches on various aspects of literary versatility, education, and politics, but also implies more wide-ranging attempts to change society as a whole. From this perspective, humanism received scrutiny both as a moral or ethical stance and as a competitive pedagogical discourse that reverberates until the present day.

Throughout the workshop, these approaches towards humanist aspects of medieval and post-medieval intellectual life and their multifarious appropriation were informed by the conviction that humanist language in and after the medieval period has never been self-evident, but was and remains essentially political and subversive. This insight has repercussions for the form and content of humanist writing and its transmission as well as for its study by modern scholars. The participants in the workshop therefore took these aspects of the language of humanism into consideration and reflected on the ways in which their own scholarly methods could elucidate the discursive properties of humanist philosophical, literary, and pedagogical enunciation. Attention was given to the ongoing reception of this language from the Middle Ages to the present. An attempt was made to evaluate the extent to which humanist conceptions of philosophy, language, literature, and politics that were elaborated between the twelfth and the sixteenth century parallel modern ideas about the relations between philosophy and literature, theory and practice, elements of which are important factors in our own intellectual stance.

The overall quality of the various introductory papers, as well as the lively discussions and comments during the workshop, gave rise to the conviction that some of its results should be made accessible to a larger audience. To that purpose, a majority of the participants agreed to rework their initial contributions into full-length essays that would reflect the progress achieved at the Groningen meeting (the articles of Wout van Bekkum, Theodore Cachey, Christel Meier-Staubach, Burcht Pranger, Bert Roest, Catrien Santing, Charlotte Ward, and Rob Zwijnenberg). In addition, several other scholars agreed to contribute essays of their own that show affinity with the

workshop's project (the articles of Catherine Kavanagh, Nancy van Deusen, John Kerr, and Karl Enekel). In all, this volume thus contains twelve essays on a wide variety of issues pertaining to the workshop's overarching subject.

The first essay deals with an early medieval attempt at revising the legacy of classical rhetoric and logic. Catherine Kavanagh asks how Eriugena reworked Cicero's and Boethius's theories of rhetorical topics and how Eriugena's own theory of topics—in which the topical commonplaces are not merely logical or rhetorical but have the character of metaphysical truths—together with his more encompassing logical theory are brought to bear on Biblical exegesis. Convinced that the Biblical text is articulated in terms of topics and is subject to the logical categories, Eriugena held that the metaphysical status of the latter provides a trustworthy hermeneutic structure for the interpretation of Scripture. Kavanagh shows that, within his rhetorical and logical framework, Eriugena combines two very different approaches to language: an analogical approach, by which language reflects external reality and an approach according to which language is that by which reality is created, which would seem to make the 'concepts of the mind' prior. Eventually, Eriugena is able to reconcile this seeming opposition in the creation of both things and concepts in the Divine Word.

The second essay, by Nancy van Deusen, likewise focuses on rhetorical issues, by explaining how, throughout medieval literary culture, conceptual relationships were exploited in order to engage in fruitful communication, composition, and artistic production. The author comments on the overriding medieval concern for adequate communication in the various realms of the arts (literature, visual arts, music), all of which exhibited a strong concern for matching carefully the conceptual substance with appropriate articulation, or, to put it metaphorically, for the 'marriage' between verbal communication (Mercury, the messenger) and actual as well as *conceptual* substance (Philology), as the many commentaries on the classic work of Martianus Capella were keen to show. This concern for adequate communication, which can be hailed as a truly 'humanist' project and had a lasting impact on Western culture, informed medieval discussions about the proper contents and methods of the various disciplines (the *trivium* arts of grammar, rhetoric, and logic, but also the *quadrivium* arts that deal with number and proportion). It also gave fuel to the medieval and post-medieval conviction that these disciplines

constituted an ordered system that was a foundation below, and background for, thinking, teaching and learning.

With Burcht Pranger, we move on from rhetoric to the 'discovery', or rather the composition and communication of the individual self and the individual self's relationship with the outside world, for a long time a bone of contention between Renaissance scholars and medievalists. Pranger argues that the 'historiographical' notion of a post-medieval Renaissance still has a strong hold over historians and that attempts at upgrading twelfth-century medieval humanism by calling it a 'Renaissance' keep it in a position of anachronistic dependency. This also holds true for the tendency to look for a new individualism in twelfth-century forms of self-representation, and to cast historical figures like Peter Abelard as new intellectuals over against conservative monastic authorities, such as Bernard of Clairvaux. To break through this blockage, Pranger looks for the way in which both Abelard and Bernard exploited comparable concepts of playfulness in presenting themselves and each other within the existing philosophical and religious frameworks. He argues that they actually can be said to have shared an 'elective affinity' of mood that belies the clear-cut medieval-modern dichotomy so often drawn between these two protagonists.

In Theodore Cachey's essay we meet Petrarch, the acknowledged prototype of 'Renaissance man,' whose self-representation has so frequently been recognised as standing for the new individuality of the Renaissance period. Cachey invites us to study how Petrarch used the metaphor and the reality of travel. Historians and literary critics alike have noticed the pervasive Augustinian notion of the *homo viator* in Petrarch's writings as well as the poet's ongoing reports and recollections of his own biographical travels. Yet Cachey reveals to us the highly ideological and rhetorical nature of Petrarch's mastery of geographical distance and space in his life and works. His travels would have made him knowledgeable about matters not generally known, especially about esotericism and recondite geography. In fact, he derived his information not only from first-hand experience, but also from his investigations into the poetic and historical literature of the past. By mining lesser geographers of classical antiquity, Petrarch obtained the materials necessary to fashion himself as a master of distant knowledge and as a heroic wayfarer. Hence, Petrarch's use of geographical space can be interpreted as a humanist project to inscribe himself upon the new, enlarging map of the Renaissance world.

Karl Enenkel subsequently scrutinises how the self-representation of the intellectual gained an overwhelming importance within Neo-Latin humanism at large, why so many humanists from Petrarch onwards were willing to invest so much time in modelling their reputation in society and among their fellow intellectuals, and how, from the outset, specific literary genres, such as the private letter, the (auto)biography and some forms of history writing, were privileged for this humanist game of self-fashioning. Within this humanist project, goals gradually seem to shift, becoming more and more ambitious, until, by the sixteenth century, humanists claimed for themselves ultimate excellence and primacy within the world of learning.

The essay by Roest evaluates many claims of humanist novelty, both with regard to the assertions of Renaissance humanists themselves and with regard to the lasting influence of humanist self-representations on the study of the medieval and the early-modern period. Medievalists who challenged the innovative character of the humanist reform project, if only because it relegates the medieval period to the margin, have frequently tried to redeem the Middle Ages by identifying humanist elements and the seeds of Renaissance humanism within medieval culture. Thus, they trace seemingly fundamental humanist innovations concerning human subjectivity, sensitivity, and the internalisation of morals back to earlier times. Roest weighs the 'case' for this medieval historiographical *reconquista*, tracing innovative medieval developments as well as the exaggerations and mystifications present in many humanist claims to novelty. However, it seems undeniable that the humanists' attack on the disciplinary hierarchies and on the dominant hermeneutics of scholastic reading paved the way for alternative discursive practices of study and scholarship, which reshaped the medieval *artes liberales* into the humanist disciplines of the *studia humanitatis*, a development that, ultimately, changed the discourse about what seemed relevant for proper education and made many medieval cultural practices irrelevant.

Christel Meier-Staubach in the next essay directs our attention to the field of humanist drama, as one area of cultural production in which the humanist ideological programme was most clearly articulated. Humanist drama did not simply reach back to the classical traditions (at first inspired by Seneca and Terence, and later by Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes), disparaging medieval dramatic practice and alleged medieval barbaric pedagogical traditions, but it was also transformed into a privileged vehicle for propagating the humanist

dual programme of eloquence and virtue. Meier-Staubach carefully charts the chief humanist concerns that found their way into Mussato's and Melanchthon's—theoretical reflections on drama, and were exploited consistently in the dramatic works of leading humanist playwrights (such as Wimpfeling, Kerckmeister, Bebel, Macropedius and Reuchlin).

The central topic of Zwijnenberg's essay is the re-interpretation of painting and in particular the humanist representation of painting as an art, as opposed to a mere craft. Zwijnenberg's focal point is Leon Battista Alberti's famous treatise *De Pictura* (1435–36), which sought to restore the glory which painting enjoyed in Antiquity. To accomplish this goal, Zwijnenberg argues, Alberti provided the activity of painting with a theoretical foundation and developed a specific technical vocabulary for discussing painting as a true liberal art. Through his concentration on linear perspective, with its specific optical and geometrical principles, through his analytical, yet rhetorical approach in pictorial composition, and through his emphasis upon the connection between the art of painting and the art of poetry, Alberti could turn painting into a respectable intellectual activity and into an appropriate subject for civilised, humanist thought and discussion.

Returning from painting to poetry, the essay by John Kerr confronts us with Chaucer's poetic appropriation of literary tradition in the *House of Fame*. In Chaucer, this tradition (in this case predominantly Dante, Virgil, and Claudian) does not point the way to closure and unified meaning, nor does it allow us to transcend our vulnerabilities in a realm of eternity and peace. Chaucer's work seems to indicate that, in our present life, escape from uncertainties is impossible. Instead, the *House of Fame* uses its literary forebears to highlight epistemological instability, which is the intellectual curse of the sublunary world and an apt metaphor for the human condition, in which the humanist activity of interpretation is never brought to an end.

With the essay by Catrien Santing, we move from poetry to medicine, and back. Her object of study consists of a group of Renaissance town-physicians from Nuremberg (Ulrich Pinder in particular), who had travelled to Italy to round off their academic studies, and who, in Italy, had become acquainted with humanistic literature and scholarship. Santing shows that, for self-emancipatory purposes, these town-physicians combined medicine with humanist scholarship in order to claim that their medical and literary oeuvre alike qualified them for the new Republic of Letters. Hence, they succeeded in cre-

ating a new medico-professional image: that of the university-trained doctor. Although their medical writings frequently reach back to late medieval traditions, the literary production of these town-physicians also points to a specific humanist *Bildungsideal*: that of the *enkyklios paideia* mirroring the frame of mind of the new *philosophus-medicus*, worthy to take his place among his humanist colleagues.

Wout van Bekkum deals with Jewish intellectual culture in Renaissance Italy. Therewith, he introduces a cultural phenomenon that is frequently left out of discussions on humanist innovation and the persistence of tradition. After sketching some major socio-cultural developments within Italian Jewish communities during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, van Bekkum not only highlights the careers of various Jewish scholars and poets, such as Abraham ibn Ezra, Immanuel of Rome and Elijah ben Asher Levita, several of whom became important cultural intermediaries and facilitators for the dissemination of Hebrew Biblical and philosophical scholarship among Christian humanists, but also signals the characteristic multilingualism and the outward-looking multiculturalism of Italian-Jewish society during the Renaissance, notwithstanding mounting opposition and religious persecution.

In the last essay of this volume, Charlotte Ward argues against (post-)Romantic ideals of poetic originality, which have caused scholars to ignore the role of earlier models in modern poetry. Ward shows how much the research strategies propagated by the New Historicism movement can help us to understand shaping influences on modern poetics that otherwise remain hidden. In this case, historical analysis reveals Ezra Pound's indebtedness to Gavin Douglas's archaic poetic translations, and also Pound's fascination with the twelfth-century Provençal troubadours, whom he considered to be the product of an important cultural Renaissance, and preferred over the 'decadence' and rhetorical wordiness of Petrarch. Pound's predilection for medieval Provençal poetic inventions as source of poetic inspiration in turn inspired the modern use of the *sestina*, and his rediscovery of the Scottish Chaucerians promoted the use of the alliterative line in twentieth century poetry.

This volume is the end of a long process, if not the end of the discussions raised at the workshop itself. Thanks are due to all participants in the workshop, particularly to those who presented introductory papers and contributed to its discussions. The editors are also grateful to the four other authors who were prepared to contribute to

this volume. Special debts are owed to Dr. David Bachrach (University of Notre Dame) and Drs. Maarten van der Heijden (Alkmaar, The Netherlands), who helped in the preparation of the manuscript and provided the necessary digital expertise, to Professor Arjo Vanderjagt, Academic Director of the Netherlands Research School for Medieval Studies, who supported our project from the beginning and accepted this volume in Brill's Studies in Intellectual History, and to the editors and collaborators of Brill Academic Publishers, who presided over the book's final production.

Stephen Gersh

Bert Roest

Notre Dame-Groningen-Basel, October 2002

ERIUENIAN DEVELOPMENTS OF CICERONIAN TOPICAL THEORY

Catherine Kavanagh

Introduction

Topical theory begins as an element of general rhetorical theory and practice. In the works of Cicero and his predecessors, it is an aspect of 'Invention', one of the five parts of rhetoric. 'Invention' is the 'discovery' of arguments to make one's case seem plausible.¹ Under this head come two very important themes, extremely significant in later, medieval developments of rhetoric: the theory of topics² and the theory of the circumstances. The topics are commonplaces, things generally accepted to be true, and these can be used in argument to underpin the case to be made. There are several varieties of these, which Cicero discusses in some detail in both the *De inventione* and the *De oratore*, and this Ciceronian discussion is later taken up and commented on by Boethius in his work on topical theory. In the work of Boethius, the many and various traditions of topical theory are systematized and developed in a more philosophical way than had previously been the case, but the Ciceronian discussion is his starting point. In addition, although the discussion does move beyond the purely practical, it is still clearly intended to be of practical use and benefit to the young orator.

The Eriugenian use of topical theory seems to rely heavily on these important Boethian developments of Ciceronian theory, itself a compilation and systematization of earlier rhetorical theory and practice, as has been noted, going back to the earliest days of the Sophists.³ Eriugena explicitly develops what is inchoate in Boethius'

¹ CICERO, *De Inventione* I, 7, 9 (p. 8).

² CICERO, *De Inventione* II, 15, 48 ss. (pp. 96, ll. 18 ss.); II, 22, 68 ss. (pp. 106, l. 23–107, l. 3).

³ For a general history of the development of rhetoric, see: KENNEDY, *Classical Rhetoric and its Christian and Secular Tradition* See also MURPHY, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages*. For ancient rhetoric, see MURPHY, *A Synoptic History of Classical Rhetoric*. See also MURPHY, *Medieval rhetoric: a Select Bibliography* & MAINBERGER, *Rhetorica*.

work on Cicero, although possibly independently of Boethius' texts on the subject: it is difficult to establish the textual basis for the theory which Eriugena clearly uses. There is the obvious problem of the lack of almost all the ancient sources. The rhetorical sources of which we can be sure include Cicero, Martianus Capella, Cassiodorus, Isidore and Augustine. It could be that Eriugena obtained a preliminary knowledge of topics from these writers, developing his own complex thought from a mixture of sources. Texts potentially available were Calcidius' translation of the *Timaeus* together with his commentary, and Boethius' translation of the *Organon* of Aristotle and his own commentary. We cannot be sure which of these texts were actually available to Eriugena: clearly he was familiar with the Aristotelian Categories, since he does considerable violence to them (with the best will in the world) in Book I of the *Periphyseon*, but his source for that could equally be the *De decem categoriis* of pseudo-Augustine.⁴ There is no compelling evidence that he was familiar with the whole *Organon* or with all of Boethius' work on the topics, although his work certainly seems to indicate that he knew the latter, but the 'Boethian' elements of Eriugena's work could equally be coincidence.⁵ However, the similarity between the Boethian model of topical theory and the topical theory clearly employed by Eriugena to structure his argument is quite striking, and therefore it is worthwhile giving Boethius' work on the subject some consideration before going on to examine Eriugena's development of topical theory.

The most significant elements of Boethius' work for Eriugena are, first, the analogy of place, which, as Gersh points out, also has a long history in the Neoplatonic philosophical tradition;⁶ second the dynamism inherent in Boethius' discussion of argument, and finally the Boethian discussion of enthymeme and the relationship of rhetoric to dialectic. Boethius' topical theory is found mainly in two works: *De topicis differentiis* and *In Ciceronis topica*, which are among his final works.⁷ These works resume and systematize a number of different traditions of topical theory: Boethius comments that although many people have written about topics, especially Cicero (*De oratore*), nobody

⁴ JOHN SCOTTUS, See É. Jeuneau (ed.), *Periphyseon, Liber Primus*, ed. Jeuneau, 32, nn. 887–897; *Periphyseon*, ed. Sheldon-Williams, I, 232, n. 98.

⁵ See GERSH 'Eriugena's 'Ars Rhetorica'.

⁶ GERSH, 'Dialectical and Rhetorical Space', 396–399.

⁷ For the chronology of Boethius' works, see OBERTELLO, *Severino Boezio*, 329–333 and the table on p. 340.

has as yet presented the theory as a whole. In systematizing topical theory, Boethius also develops it: the collection of commonplaces which in the Aristotelian and Ciceronian schools had been practical devices for constructing legal and political arguments become at least potentially metaphysical structures.⁸ In *De topicis differentiis*, Book I is devoted to the laying down of basic terminology, Books II and III to the careful outlining and collation of the various divisions of the two principal dialectical topics and Book IV to the discussion of the two principal rhetorical topics. Boethius establishes four main kinds of topic: the maximal proposition, the *differentia* of a maximal proposition, the circumstance and the accident of a circumstance, each of these being further categorized according to whether they are propositional or non-propositional, internal or external, universal or particular, relative or non-relative. There is a considerable amount of philosophical discussion in the more expansive *In Ciceronis topica*,⁹ notably in Book V, where Boethius wants to make the definitions of such terms as 'Cause' and 'Chance' clear, by comparing the respective Ciceronian and Aristotelian definitions of these terms.¹⁰

The careful definitions of the negative proposition, the affirmative proposition, the predicative and conditional proposition, the question, the argument and so on, which we find in Book I of *De topicis* create a framework for discourse which guarantees clarity within a particular sphere and under particular conditions. This discourse needs a foundation of clear, unambiguous concepts in the mind of the philosopher, the dialectician or the orator, and in the field of juridical rhetoric, it is these concepts which will form the structure of the speech. In this area of Boethius' work, poetry is excluded, since it seeks the kind of enlightenment that it provides through connotation, an approach which exploits the polysemy and ambivalence of language. Such reliance on connotation is diametrically opposed to the requirements

⁸ For a succinct and thorough account of the philosophical implications of the Boethian topics, see GERSH, 'Dialectical and Rhetorical Space', 391–401. The table on p. 393, setting out the relationships between the various types of topic is very useful; although the reduction of the Boethian classification to Porphyrion trees by Stump, *De topicis differentiis* has the advantage that it presents the material in a format which would have been familiar to Boethius, and is therefore historically consistent, Gersh's point that Boethius was dealing with a very complex textual tradition which could only be accommodated by the devising of a more complex structure akin to contemporary semantic models is well taken.

⁹ BOETHIUS, *In Ciceronis topica*, *Patrologia Latina* LXIV, 1156.

¹⁰ BOETHIUS, *In Ciceronis topica*, *Patrologia Latina* LXIV, 1145–1158.

of this kind of discourse, although of course, in order to be intelligible, a poem must have its own kind of internal logic.¹¹ The discussion here is intended very deliberately to establish a method of approach which makes for persuasive argument in rhetoric and seeks to investigate the truth in philosophy.¹² Boethius establishes the fundamental link between the orator, the dialectician, and the philosopher: they all need clear arguments; he also establishes the fundamental difference between them: the philosopher seeks the 'path of truth', whereas the other two are content with 'abundance of materials for speech.'

In Book II, he discusses syllogism and induction, and the incomplete and particular varieties of these, enthymeme and example, and comes to the conclusion that '... all of these are drawn from the syllogism, and obtain their force from the syllogism.' Thus he concludes that syllogism is '... principal and inclusive of the other species of argumentation.' He then goes on to define the dialectical topics—i.e., dialectic in the sense that 'dialectic' is opposed to demonstrative argu-

¹¹ Insofar as a poem has movement from the first line through to the last, it can be said to have a certain dialectical structure. See, for example, the Boethian poems in *De Consolatione*, which display a certain order in movement from beginning to end, which could perhaps be described as 'dialectical', with this difference, however, from the kind of discourse being established here: the polysemy of language is fully accepted by the poet, and worked into the dialectic established by him; whereas for Boethius here, the divisions to be worked out require monosemy for the sake of clarity. However, the high degree of complexity of the Boethian model of topical theory does allow for great semantic richness, which can be worked into the kind of rigorously philosophical poetry written by him and later by Eriugena—although, of course, the theological poetry written by Eriugena is also found in the Greek tradition—e.g. the works of St. Gregory of Nazianzen.

¹² BOETHIUS, *De Topicis differentiis*, *Patrologia Latina* LXIV, col. 1182C–D, trans. Stump, Op. cit., 42. 'Quocirca topicorum pariter utilitas intentioque patefacta est. His enim et dicendi facultas et veritatis augetur. Nam quod dialecticos atque oratores locorum iuvat agnitio, orationi per inventionem copiam praestat; quod vero necessarium doctrinam locorum philosophis tradit, viam quodammodo veritatis illustrat. Quo magis pervestiganda est, rimandaque ulterius disciplina eaque cum agnitione percepta sit, usu atque exercitatione firmanda. Magnum enim aliquid locorum consideratio pollicetur, scilicet inveniendi vias. Quod quidem hi sunt hujus rationes expertes soli prorsus deputant ingenio, neque intelligunt quantum hac consideratione queritur quae in artem redigit vim et potestatem naturae.' (So the usefulness and purpose of the Topics have both been made clear, for they aid both competence in speech and the investigation of truth. Insofar as knowledge of the Topics serves dialecticians and orators, it provides an abundance [of materials] for speech (*oratio*) by means of the discovery [of arguments]; on the other hand, insofar as it teaches philosophers about the topics of necessary [arguments], it points out in a certain way the path of truth (...). For study of the Topics promises something great, namely, the paths of discovery, which those who are ignorant of this account impute altogether to natural talent alone; they do not understand how much by means of this study one acquires that which brings force to art and power to nature).

ment.¹³ There are two kinds of topic: one based on maximal propositions, the other based on the *differentiae*.¹⁴ A maximal proposition is a self-evident proposition, but there are hundreds of these, and rather than wasting time learning them by heart, one can identify characteristic *differentiae* of groups of maximal propositions, and learn those: this will in turn recall the relevant maximal propositions. Maximal

¹³ BOETHIUS, *De Topicis differentiis*, *Patrologia Latina*, LXIV, cols. 1185A–1186B, trans. Stump, *De topicis*, 46–48. ‘Locus namque est (ut M. Tullio placet) sedes argumenti. (...) Argumenti enim sedes partim propositio maxima intelligi potest, partim maximae propositionis differentia . . . illae antiquissimam teneant probationem, quae ita aliis facere fidem possunt, ut ipsis nihil notius queat inveniri. Nam si argumentum est quod rei dubiae facit fidem, idque notius ac probabilius esse oportet quam illud est quod probatur, necesse est quod argumentis omnibus illa maxima fidem tribuant, quae ita per se nota sunt, ut aliena probatione non egeant. (...) Est igitur uno quidem modo locus (ut dictum est) maxima et universalis, et principalis, et indemonstrabilis, atque per se nota propositio, quae in argumentationibus, vel inter ipsas propositiones, vel extrinsecus posita, vim tamen argumentis et propositionibus subministrat. Ideo et universales et maxime propositiones loci sunt dictae, quoniam ipsae sunt quae continent caeteras propositiones, et per eas fit consequens et rata conclusio. Ac sicut locus in se corporis continet quantitatem, ita hae propositiones quae sunt maximae, intra se omnem vim posteriorem atque ipsius conclusionis consequentiam tenent, et uno quidem modo locus, id est argumenti sedes dicitur maxima, principalis que propositio fidem caeteris subministrans. Alio vero modo loci vocantur maximarum differentiae propositionum, quae scilicet ab his ducuntur terminis qui in quaestione sunt constituti, de quibus deinceps disserendum est. Cum enim sint plurimae propositiones quae maximae vocantur, haeque sint inter se dissimiles, quibus cunq̄ue differentiis inter se discrepant, eas omnes locos vocamus. . . . Nam uniuscujusque substantia ex propriis differentiis constat . . . Et hi loci qui sunt differentiae propositionum, ipsis propositionibus universaliores existunt. . . . Atque ideo pauciores esse deprehenduntur hi loci qui in differentiis positi sunt, quam propositiones quarum sunt differentiae. Omnia enim quae universaliora sunt, pauciora semper esse continget.’

¹⁴ See BOETHIUS, *De Topicis*, trans. E. Stump, 193: According to Stump, Boethius has given rise to a particular development of the Aristotelian topics in his relocation of the topics within the area of ‘Differentiae.’ In her view, Aristotle’s topics ‘are principles similar to Boethius’s maximal propositions or strategies for argument or both.’ But she claims that ‘Boethius seems to think of Aristotle’s method as such an unwieldy instrument [i.e. ‘a boxful of recipes for arguments to be memorized’], involving the memorization of prefabricated Topics; and his own method for using maximal propositions seems to be much the same: rote-learning of certain self-evident generalizations useful for dialectical arguments.’ However, because of the very nature of dialectic, the maximal proposition—that which is known *in se* and incapable of any further demonstration—cannot be the real ‘instrument of finding arguments’; the maximal proposition is essential to demonstration, and gives validity to dialectical argument, but demonstration, or the establishment of proofs, is not dialectic; the aim of dialectic, again according to Stump, is psychological rather than logical: ‘. . . an argument is what produces belief regarding what was in doubt (. . .). The aim of a questioner in a dialectical disputation is to get the answerer to agree to the questioner’s thesis; both the questioner and the answerer work at producing conviction for their positions. Ibidem, 198–90.

propositions, so essential to demonstration, are important to dialectic mainly insofar as they give validity to arguments. Rather than establishing absolute, incontrovertible, logical proofs, which is demonstration, dialectic aims to produce conviction, and for this reason is applicable to a far wider range of arguments than demonstration alone. This emphasis on the establishment of conviction rather than on the strictly logical proof places Boethian dialectic midway between demonstration and rhetoric. The most effective instrument of dialectic is the *differentia* between maximal propositions—i.e. the middle term in a syllogism, since this is what gives dynamic force to the argument, and this middle term is the topic, or ‘place’ of the argument. Thus the ‘place’ of the argument is actually that which gives force to it: place has become a very dynamic category; it is the springboard for dialectical argument, and thus for the discipline of rhetoric also. We also find a discussion of argument and its relation to the topic in *In Ciceronis topica*: the topic is not itself the argument, but that which gives force to the argument. Argument is a dynamic process, initially conceptual, then verbally expressed as argumentation, on a practical level, producing belief regarding something which is in doubt. From this, Boethius goes on to draw the famous analogy between topic and place, exploiting the dual significance of Greek *topos*/Latin *locus*: the *differentia* of a topic is *quadam veluti imagine* the site of an argument, ‘a sort of ultimate seat of arguments.’¹⁵

In Book IV of *De topicis differentiis*, Boethius discusses rhetorical topics, of which there are two types, the topic based on circumstances

¹⁵ This analogy continues throughout his discussion. Later on, Boethius observes ‘... it can happen that a broader topic contains narrower topics within its scope, as provinces contain cities...’. It is also characteristic of his discussion in *De topicis differentiis*: ‘... sicut locus in se corporis continet quantitatem, ita hae propositiones quae sunt maximae, intra se omnem vim posteriorem atque ipsius conclusionis consequentiam tenent...’ (... as a place contains within itself the quantity of a body, so these propositions which are maximal contain within them selves the whole force of secondary propositions and the deriving of the conclusion itself.) Ibidem, *Patrologia Latina* LXIV, 1185A, translation Stump. In these works, the analogy of place remains, in a literary sense, on the level of simile, introduced by an expression such as *veluti*. Perhaps it is exaggerating to see a possible metaphysical significance in this, but it is notable that in Eriugena’s work, where the metaphysical significance of ‘place’ is beyond doubt, the analogy is fully metaphorical: limitation is place, and place is limitation. The usual sense of place is in fact symbolic of its real significance. It may be that this position is implicit in Boethius’ work also, but he does not make it overt and the use of simile rather than metaphor is one thing that keeps the transformation from being complete.

and the topic based on the accident of a circumstance.¹⁶ The circumstances here are the seven *periochai*, or *circumstantiae* of forensic investigation and hermeneutic discourse. It is the use of the *circumstantiae* that decides whether a topic is rhetorical or dialectical; if they are present, then the topic is rhetorical. Rhetoric uses all four of the topics discussed here, whereas dialectic only needs the first two—from the maximal proposition and from the *differentia*. However, the rhetorician depends on the dialectical topics, which are prior to the rhetorical ones: ‘the rhetorician always proceeds from dialectical Topics, but the dialectician can be content with his own Topics (. . .) the range of dialectical topics is greater.’¹⁷ The relationship of dialectic to rhetoric is one of universal to particular: ‘. . . the disciplines are distinguished from one another by the universality [of the one] and the particularity [of the other].’ However, from another perspective, the range of rhetorical argument is wider, since it can deal with the particular. The relationship of the Boethian dialectic to the Boethian rhetoric is not a matter of simple overlap in some areas; for Boethius, dialectic is the universal art of division and argument which gives coherence to, and indeed makes possible the particular, circumstantial art of rhetoric.

Eriugena’s topical theory

We are not going to find the same legal and political matter of topics in Eriugena’s work on the subject as we find in Boethius’ treatment, nor will we find the immense complexity of the Boethian model, which, as has been noted, is due to the large number of different traditions of topical theory available to Boethius,¹⁸ although the complex Boethian model of topics does seem to be taken for granted in Eriugena’s application of topical argument to metaphysical questions. Rather than providing an overt justification for the use of topical argument for this purpose, Eriugena goes straight to exploring the metaphysical possibilities of what it is one means by a ‘place’, the ‘place’ of an argument or of anything else. Having established the fundamental

¹⁶ Ibidem, *Patrologia Latina* LXIV, 1212C, 1215D–1216A (topic based on circumstances); 1214 A–C (topic based on the accident of a circumstance).

¹⁷ Ibidem.

¹⁸ See the works of GERSH.

ontological status of place, he then identifies it with the dialectical topic and thus one can infer that the topical argument on which he bases his system is ontologically solid. The dialectical topic at this point seems to include the rhetorical topic as well, although contrariwise, Eriugena appears also to assimilate dialectic to demonstration, and oppose it to rhetoric.

The treatise on place in Book I of the *Periphyseon* is a good place to begin the examination of Eriugena's topical theory. The argument is itself worked out in terms of several different topics (e.g. from the whole or from genus, from definition, from causes, from effects), and place is itself ultimately identified with the dialectical topic. The topics are not logical merely, but ontological also, and given the quasi-ontological status of language for Eriugena, this is to be expected. For Eriugena, then, the topics are metaphysical truths, and later in the *Periphyseon*, he will struggle to work out his Biblical exegesis in terms of these truths. Since the topics are metaphysical truths, it must be that Scripture is articulated in terms of the topics, and thus they provide a very trustworthy hermeneutical structure for the interpretation of Scripture. In fact, Eriugena believes Scripture teaches that reality is created in terms of dialectic: he bases this belief on the Latin version of Genesis, which states that God created all things in number, weight, measure, *genus and species*.¹⁹

Given that much of Eriugena's systematization is structured in terms of topics, clearly an exhaustive account of his topical theory would be a huge task. For the sake of brevity, I shall concentrate on a few select topics, which seem to have a particular importance for him, above all within the discussion of place itself in the *Periphyseon*. A notable use of dialectical or rhetorical topics occurs in those areas

¹⁹ JOHN SCOTTUS, *Periphyseon*, ed. Jeauneau, Book IV, XIII–XIV, 748D–749A: 'Quoniam itaque in hac omnium communi terra omnia animalia secundum corpus et animam causaliter et primordialiter creata sunt; nam in honore omnia facta sunt: quid mirum, si divino praecepto jubeatur, animam viventem, hoc est animal vivens producere, ut, quod causaliter occulte in causis et rationibus habebat, hoc in genera et species aperte produceret? Et vide, quomodo naturalem rerum consequentiam divinum nobis manifestat eloquium. Producat, inquit, terra animam viventem in genere suo. Primo genus posuit, quoniam in ipso omnes species et continentur et unum sunt, et in eas dividitur et multiplicatur per generales formas specialissimasque species. Quod etiam ostendit dicens: Jumenta et reptilia et bestias terrae secundum species suas. Ac per hoc intelligitur, quod ars illa, quae dividit genera in species, et species in genera resolvit, quae ΔΙΑΛΕΚΤΙΚΗ dicitur, non ab humanis machinationibus sit facta, sed in natura rerum, ab auctore omnium artium, quae vere artes sunt, condita, et a sapientibus inventa, et ad utilitatem solerti rerum indagine usitata.'

where demonstration would be impossible, for instance, in the question of the relation between the utterly transcendent God and his creation. It is a topic which provides Eriugena with a workable structure capable of accounting for a connection between the created world, which we know, and God whom ultimately we cannot comprehend. In other cases, where demonstration would be possible but tedious, dialectical and rhetorical topics often provide a swifter but no less clear form of argumentation. The assumption is that valid *differentiae* ultimately rest on valid axioms, and that if the dialectical argument proceeds rationally, then the syllogistic structure underpinning it will also be sound, if it is analyzed. In addition, rhetoric and dialectic suit the dialogue form of the *Periphyseon* perfectly, since they are closer to the conversational nature of dialogue than demonstration is. Most of Eriugena's argument rests on topics, maximal propositions and their *differentiae*. For the purposes of this article, the topics I shall look at are: from genus and from species (or from the whole and from parts), from similars, from proportion, from cause and effect and from definition.

The topics of genus and species evidently underpin Eriugena's discussion of the nature of essence (*ousia*). At 472C, Eriugena writes:

Is *ousia* wholly . . . contained within the most general genera and in the more general genera as well as in the genera themselves and in their species and again in those most special species which are called atoms, that is, individuals?²⁰

This question, posed by the Nutritor, neatly sums up the main indications by which it would be known that essence is universal: that it is found in individual, in species and in genera—both in the categories and in the sub-genera which constitute their species. Two maximal propositions are involved here, depending on which angle of approach one takes: if one begins with 'most general genera', the categories, as Eriugena's instinctive Platonism inclines him to do, then the topic is: 'from genus', the maximal proposition: 'whatever is present to the genus is present to the species,'²¹ and this will be true all through the hierarchy of being, from the most general genera, as he puts it,

²⁰ JOHN SCOTTUS, *Periphyseon*, ed. Jauneau, Book I, 472C, ll. 1295–1299: 'Num OYCIA in generibus generalissimis et in generibus generalioribus, in ipsis quoque generibus eorumque speciebus, atque iterum specialissimis speciebus, quae atoma, id est individua dicuntur, universaliter proprieque continentur?'

²¹ BOETHIUS, *De topicis differentiis*, *Patrologia Latina* LXIV, 188B.

to the most special species, i.e. the individual. It can also be put as a conditional: if it is true for the most general genus, it is also true for the most special species. One can also begin with the individual, in which case the topic is: 'from parts', and the maximal proposition is: 'Whatever inheres in the individual parts must also inhere in the whole.'²² Ousia inheres in the individual parts, since without it they would not exist; therefore it must also inhere in the whole, that is to say, in each species consisting of the individuals and in the genera consisting of the species, all the way up to the categories. Thus the universality of ousia is evident from every angle.

The topics of genus and species also help to clarify the issue of relation within essence. Eriugena writes (472A): 'There is however, relation even within OUSIA, when genus is related to species and species to genus, for genus is the genus of species and species is the species of genus.'²³ We have seen that ousia is found within genus and species; therefore it is present to both. But genus and species are a form of relation ('genus is the genus of species' and vice versa), so if essence is present to both, it must also be present to relation. Therefore, there is relation within ousia. This is a very important point for theological reasons, since it clears the way for Trinitarian theology: if relation is present in ousia, it must also be present in the creator of ousia, (as the cause of ousia), hence the Trinity. Finally, Eriugena writes (472A):

... the condition of ousia is the unchangeable virtue of genus and species by which the genus even when it is divided into species still remains one and indivisible in itself and subsists as a whole in each species, and all its separate species form a whole in it (...) the same virtue is also seen in the species which even when it is divided among individuals, preserves undiminished the force of its own indivisible unity ... (PPI, 472A)

Again, the topic 'from genus' plays an important part here, since the fact that what is present to the genus is present also to the species is a strong argument in favor of a certain underlying unity. Of course,

²² Ibidem, 1188D.

²³ JOHN SCOTTUS, *Periphyseon*, ed. Jeauneau, Book I 472A, ll. 1268–1270: 'Habitus vero OYCIAE, generis, aut speciei, est virtus ipsa immobilis, per quam genus, dum per species dividitur, in seipso semper unum individuumque permanet, et totum in speciebus singulis, et singulae species in ipso unum sunt. Eadem virtus et in specie perspicitur, quae, dum per numeros dividatur, suae individuae unitatis inexhaustam vim custodit.'

by making the unity a dynamic unifying force, Eriugena is taking the relation of genus and species beyond the bald statement of the maximal proposition which, nonetheless, anchors this relation. Later (476B), Eriugena will attribute this element of dynamism to participation: the actual nature of any given thing, essence or accident, is stable.²⁴ What causes motion is participation, which can increase or decrease. The difference, perhaps, from previous perspectives on genus and species is the element of dynamism, but this is a difficult historical question.

The topic of genus also helps Eriugena clarify his teaching on the nature of the arts and virtues. At 474A, he writes:

... every art, that is, every motion of the rational or irrational mind, once it has attained to a fixed state so that it cannot in any way on any occasion be moved from it but always adheres to the mind so that it seems to be one with the mind itself, is called a condition, and therefore every perfected virtue which is inseparably fixed in the mind is truly and properly called a condition.²⁵

In this case, Eriugena seems to be taking 'virtues' as individual species of the 'arts', so therefore, if an art which has been fixed stably in the mind (*learnt?*) is called a condition (for Eriugena, this means that it *is* a condition), then every virtue fixed stably in the mind is likewise called a condition, virtue here seemingly being taken as an intellectual virtue, a part of the whole, the whole being the art of which it is a particular virtue.

At 473B, Eriugena writes:

... does that which is called by the Greeks *PROS TI*, but by us 'with regard to things', or relation, properly occupy any other place in nature than in the proportions of things or numbers, and in the indissoluble ties which exist between those things which stand in regard to one another so that when the one is spoken of the meaning is understood not from itself but from the other which is opposed to it?²⁶

²⁴ *Ibidem*, 476B, ll. 1451–1453: 'Omnis siquidem natura seu essentiarum, seu eis accidentium immutabilis est; participatio vero, ut diximus, essentiarum ab accidentibus, seu accidentium ab essentiis, semper in motu est.'

²⁵ *Ibidem*, 474A, ll. 1384–1368: 'Omnis enim disciplina, hoc est, omnis rationabilis animi motus aut irrationabilis, dum ad certum statum pervenerit, ita ut nullo modo ab eo ulla occasione moveri possit, sed semper animo adhaereat, ut unum id ipsumque ei esse videatur, habitus dicitur. Ac per hoc omnis perfecta virtus animo inseparabiliter adhaerens, vere ac proprie habitus appellatur.'

²⁶ *Ibidem*, 473B, ll. 1328–1333: 'Num et ea, quae a Graecis dicitur *ΠΡΟΣ ΤΙ*, a nobis vero ad aliquid, vel relatio, alium locum proprie in natura rerum possidet,

There are two topics (*differentiae*) employed here. The first is 'from contraries', of which there are a couple of different maximal propositions: a) 'properties of opposites which are related to each other are themselves related to each other'; b) 'contraries which are relative cannot occur without each other.'²⁷ The second *differentia* is 'from similars', and the maximal proposition is: 'regarding similars, the judgment is one and the same.'²⁸ The similars in this case are relation and proportion: as Eriugena implies, they are not exactly the same. The relation between the notes of the various musical modes, and the harmony between these latter is not the same as the relation between father and son. The former is an example of proportion, in which intermediate terms are possible, whereas the latter is an example of relative contraries, which do not permit intermediate terms. However, they are similar, and therefore the judgment regarding each is the same: they are both instances of *pros ti*. As regards the argument from contraries, Eriugena is clearly using this topic when he refers to the things that are understood not in themselves, but in their opposites—as for example, the presence of fatherhood is understood from the fact that there are offspring. Neither 'father' nor 'son' can occur without the other, and there is no intermediate term. Although different from proportion, as has been noted, this is none the less a form of relation. Clearly, what is true of relative contraries such as 'father' and 'son' is also implicitly true of their properties (in this case, 'procreation'), and this is an example of the first maximal proposition: 'properties of opposites which are related to each other are themselves related to each other'²⁹—again, this is an instance of relation.

The differential topic of 'cause and effect' is used by Eriugena to resolve one of the most important questions which his negative theology raises: if God is ultimately absolutely transcendent, how do we know anything of him at all? According to Eriugena, we know him from his effects. There are a number of maximal propositions which deal with cause and effect: a) 'those things whose efficient causes are natural are themselves also natural (. . . for the cause of anything effects the thing it causes . . .)';³⁰ b) 'where the cause is, the effect cannot

nisi in proportionibus rerum seu numerorum, inque reciprocis eorum, quae ad se invicem respiciunt, conversionibus inseparabilibus, ita ut, quod unum dicitur, non a seipso, sed ab altero, quod ei opponitur, accipere intelligatur?"

²⁷ BOETHIUS, *De topicis differentiis*, Patrologia Latina LXIV, 1198A.

²⁸ Ibidem, 1197D.

²⁹ Ibidem, 1191D.

³⁰ Ibidem, 1189C.

be absent';³¹ c) 'where the effect is, the cause cannot be absent.'³² These particular propositions clearly deal with efficient causes, but material, formal and final causes can likewise all be instances of the topic 'from causes.'³³ There are a number of important applications of cause and effect in Eriugena: at 487B he writes: '... even the Cause of all things, which is God, is only known to be from the things created by Him, but by no inference from creatures can we understand what He is, and therefore only this definition can be predicated of God: that He is Who is More-than-Being.'³⁴ This answers the fundamental question as to whether or not one can know God at all. Given that an intelligible universe exists, we can know it had a cause: 'where the effect is, the cause cannot be absent,' and the cause of the effect which is the universe is God. He is not himself the effect; therefore, if we say that 'being' is characteristic of the universe, from the highest to the lowest element, then God must be more than being, and so the transcendence of God is asserted. Thus we see that the notion of God as cause both establishes the existence of a relation between God and the universe and affirms the distinction between God and the universe, and so holds immanence and transcendence in a kind of balance. Beyond the fact that He is the cause of the universe, all that we know of God comes to us as a kind of metaphor. At 480A–B, Eriugena writes: '... all things (...) can justly be predicated of God because He is the Creator of them all ...'³⁵ This relates to the first of the maximal propositions mentioned above: 'the things whose efficient causes are natural are themselves also natural ... for the cause of anything effects the thing it causes.' Since God is ultimately the cause of all things, the things caused are effected by him. Since the efficient cause of the universe is God, as the nature of God is, so will the nature of the universe be also; the thing caused (the universe) will be natural as the cause (God) is natural. Therefore, the universe is an accurate reflection of God, although it is not God, since it is not its own cause, and as an accurate reflection, it can be predicated of God. This predication is a kind

³¹ Ibidem, 1199A.

³² Ibidem, 1199B.

³³ Ibidem, 1189C–D.

³⁴ JOHN SCOTTUS, *Periphyseon*, ed. Jeauneau Book I, 487B, ll. 1922–1924: 'Nam et causa omnium, quae Deus est, ex his, quae ab ea condita sunt, solummodo cognoscitur esse; nullo vero creaturarum argumento possumus intelligere, quid sit: atque ideo sola haec definitio de Deo praedicatur, quia est, qui plus quam esse est.'

³⁵ Ibidem, 480A–B, ll. 1614–1616.

of metaphor, although unlike most metaphors one of the terms—God—is never to be fully comprehended, or one could say, following pseudo-Dionysius or indeed Augustine, that the things themselves are symbols of God. The logical action of predication and the theological action of symbolism are identified here: the thing itself is both a predication applied to God and a symbol of him; insofar as it is a predication, it is a symbol. This type of predication from cause and effect is also used to establish the unity of the universe. At 467B, Eriugena writes: ‘. . . the nature by which all subsist is one, being the creation of the one God . . .’³⁶ Strictly speaking, we know not exactly what we say when we say that God is power, but what we say is true insofar as it concerns us. Since God is the cause of power, it does have some relation to him; the predication is not arbitrary. As regards God in himself, he is beyond all created power. This relation of cause and effect to the metaphor is extremely significant; it is what validates this metaphor.

Metaphor comes up again at 465D, where Eriugena writes:

. . . since He is the Cause of standing and lying—for in Him all things both stand, that is subsist immutably in their reasons, and lie, that is, find their rest, because He is the End of all things (. . .) ‘to lie’, or situation can be predicated of Him metaphorically . . .³⁷

At this point, Eriugena is working his way through the categories, with a view to proving that they are the spiritual causes of all existing things. In order to do that, he has to prove that they are the first expression of God’s creation, but because God is utterly transcendent, obviously the categories cannot literally be found in God. Cause and effect helps him with this: as God is the efficient cause of situation, situation can this be predicated of him metaphorically. What is interesting here is that God is the efficient cause of situation in part by being the final cause of the universe: as the End of all things—i.e., their final cause—He can be said to be their ‘resting place’. Of course, for Eriugena, God is both the First and Final Nature: that which creates and is not created, and also that which neither cre-

³⁶ Ibidem, 467B, 1068–1069: ‘Nulla enim natura major aut minor alia natura sit, sicut neque superior neque inferior, cum una omnium subsistat natura, ex uno Deo condita.’

³⁷ Ibidem, 36, 465D, ll. 1005–1009: ‘At vero quoniam standi et jacendi causa est; in ipso enim omnia et stant, hoc est, immutabiliter secundum suas rationes subsistunt, et jacent, hoc est quiescunt; finis enim omnium est, ultra quem nihil appetunt: potest de eo translative jacere vel situs praedicari.’

ates nor is created, so this rather ingenious identification of efficient and final cause is not particularly surprising. The same type of reasoning is used in regard to condition,³⁸ place and time, where all can be predicated of God since He is the cause of them. Finally, cause is also identified with form at 474C, where he writes:

. . . spirit is an incorporeal nature without form or matter in itself: for every spirit that is either rational or intellectual is by itself formless, but if it turns towards its Cause, that is, the Word, by Whom all things are made, then it takes on form. Therefore the one Form of all rational and intellectual spirits is the Word of God. But if the spirit is irrational, it is equally formless in itself, but it takes form from the fantasies of sensible things . . .³⁹

The cause of all things is the Word, and, as has been pointed out, the Word is the principle of intelligibility; the universe is intelligible because its cause is the Word. Therefore a spirit that has the freedom

³⁸ Ibidem, 39, 468B–C, ll. 1113–1129: ‘Nonne igitur vides, divinam essentiam nullius habitudinis participem esse, de ea tamen non incongrue, quoniam ipsius est causa, praedicari posse? Si enim proprie de ipsa habitus praedicaretur, nequaquam suimet, sed alterius esset. Omnis quippe habitus in aliquo subjecto intelligitur, et alicujus accidens est, quod de Deo, cui nullum accidit, et qui accidit nulli, in nulloque intelligitur, et nullum in ipso, impium est credere (. . .) Nonne ex his, quae praedicta sunt, de ceteris categoriis breviter possumus colligere? Non enim Deus locus, neque tempus est; attamen locus omnium translative dicitur, et tempus, quia omnium locorum temporumque causa est. Omnium quipped definitiones, quasi quidam loci, in ipso subsistunt, et ab ipso quasi a quodam tempore, per ipsum veluti per quoddam tempus, et in ipsum veluti in finem quendam temporum, motus omnium et incipit, et movetur, et desinit, dum ipse nec se moveat per tempus, nec ab alio moveatur.’ [Do you not see that the Divine Essence does not participate in any condition; and that nevertheless condition can be not unsuitably predicated of it since the Divine Essence is its cause? For if condition were predicated of it properly [it] would not be of itself, but of another. For every condition is understood to be in some subject and to be the accident of something, which it is impious to believe of God, to Whom nothing is an accident, and Who is not an accident of anything, and Who is not comprehended in anything, nor anything in Him (. . .) God is neither place nor time, and yet metaphorically He is called the Place and Time of all things because He is the Cause of all places and all times. For the definitions of all things subsist in Him as places, as it were; and from Him as from a certain moment of time, through Him as through a certain period of time and towards Him as towards the end, as it were, of times, the motion of all things both begins and moves and comes to an end, although He Himself neither moves Himself nor is moved by Himself or by another . . .]

³⁹ Ibidem, 474C: ‘. . . spiritus est natura incorporea, forma per se atque materie carens. Omnis enim spiritus, sive rationabilis sive intellectualis sit, per se ipsum informis est. Si vero conversus fuerit ad causam suam, hoc est, ad Verbum, per quod facta sunt omnia, tunc formatur. Est igitur una forma omnium spirituum, rationabilium et intellectualium, Dei Verbum. Si vero irrationabilis spiritus sit, similiter informis est per seipsum, formatur tamen rerum sensibilibus phantasiis.’

to turn away from the Word will become unintelligible or formless if it does so, since sensible things are mere fantasies, but if it chooses to turn towards the Word, it will be formed by it. Once again, we notice that the efficient cause and the final cause are identified: the Word which caused the spirit to be is also the true final end of the spirit, and this is true at least in part because the cause effects the thing that it causes: their natures are the same.

The differential topic of 'antecedents and consequents' works together with the differential topic of 'associated things' when Eriugena comes to talk about the relationship between the method of defining, the liberal arts and the soul. Defining is clearly an intellectual exercise, and the liberal arts are likewise intellectual pursuits, valued for their own sake, and so he needs to find a link between them. At this point in the argument, Eriugena has already placed the liberal arts in the soul, as a kind of formation that develops the soul spiritually. He writes (486B):

... since we see that the liberal arts which are constituted in the soul are different from the soul itself, which is a kind of subject of the arts, while the arts seem to be a kind of accidents which are inseparable from, and natural to, the soul, what hinders us from placing the method of defining among the arts, attaching it to the art of dialectic, whose property is to divide and combine and distinguish the natures of all things which can be understood, and to allot each to its proper place, and therefore is usually called by the wise the true contemplation of things? For as in every rational and intellectual nature there are observed three things which are inseparable from one another, and abide indestructibly forever, I mean *ousia* and *dunamis* and *energeia*, i.e. essence power and operation (. . .) does it not seem likely (. . .) that all the liberal arts should be held in that part which is called the *energeia*, that is, the operation of the soul?⁴⁰

⁴⁰ Ibidem, 486B, ll. 1875–1891: 'Sed quoniam videmus, aliud esse constitutas in anima liberales artes, aliud ipsam animam, quae quasi quoddam subjectum est artium, artes vero veluti inseparabilia naturaliaque animae accidentia videntur esse, quid nos prohibet, definiendi disciplinam inter artes ponere, adjungentes dialecticae, cujus proprietas est, rerum omnium, quae intelligi possunt, naturas dividere, conjungere, discernere, propriosque locos unicuique distribuere? Atque ideo a sapientibus vera rerum contemplatio solet appellari. Nam cum in omni rationabili intellectualique natura tria inseparabilia semper que incorruptibiliterque manentia considerentur, ΟΥΣΙΑΝ dico, et ΔΥΝΑΜΙΝ, ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΑΝ que, hoc est, essentiam, virtutem, operationem; haec enim teste sancto Dionysio inseparabiliter sibimet adhaerent, ac veluti sunt, et nec augeri nec minui possunt, quoniam immortalia sunt atque immutabilia: num tibi verisimile videtur, certaeque rationi conveniens, omnes liberales disciplinas in ea parte, quae ΕΝΕΡΓΕΙΑ id est operatio animae dicitur, aestimari?'

Dialectic is the art by which things are truly known—this is why he calls it contemplation—and definition is what presents things to the mind, consequently, definition must be a part of dialectic, since in order to function, it needs dialectical division, combination and distinction. Therefore, definition is a part of dialectic, and is placed among the arts. The differential topic employed here is ‘antecedents and consequents’; the maximal proposition: ‘once the antecedent [that the method of defining is dialectical in operation] has been asserted, the consequent [therefore it is a part of dialectic] follows.’⁴¹ It is also clearly an operation, and this helps to clarify where the arts should be placed as regards the different capacities of the soul: since defining and dialectic are operative in nature, it must be that they are to be placed in the operative part of the soul, and therefore, the arts, which are associated with them, are also to be placed in the operative part of the soul. The differential topic here is ‘from associated things’; the maximal proposition ‘things that are associated with other things are judged on the basis of those things.’⁴²

The topic ‘from definition’ is used by Eriugena both to clarify the nature of place and to establish the nature of definition itself. As regards the latter, he writes:

Among the liberal arts also, very many definitions are found: for there is no art without its definitions, as there are the dialectical definitions from genus, from species, from name, a priori, a posteriori, from contraries, and other definitions of this kind, which there is no time to discuss now. For the dialectical definitions extend over so wide a field that from wherever in the nature of things the dialectical mind finds an argument which establishes a doubtful matter it describes the *essè* of the argument . . . as a place. You will find the same thing in the other arts.⁴³

First, we note that there are specific definitions proper to each of the liberal arts. Those proper to dialectic concern genus, species, name and so forth—in other words, the elements of dialectic. If an art is a genus, and its elements are species, then whatever does not

⁴¹ BOETHIUS, *De topicis differentiis*, Patrologia Latina LXIV, 1198D.

⁴² *Ibidem*, 1198B.

⁴³ JOHN SCOTTUS, *Periphyseon*, ed. Jeaneau, Book I, 474D–475A, ll. 1392–1401: ‘Item in disciplinis liberalibus plurima loca reperiuntur. Nulla enim ars est quae suis locis careat, ut sunt loci dialectici, a genere, a specie, a nomine, ab antecedentibus, a consequentibus, a contrariis, ceterique hujusmodi, de quibus nunc disserere longum est. Nam tam late patent dialectici loci, ut, undecunque dialecticus animus in natura rerum argumentum, quod rei dubiae facit fidem, repererit, locum argumenti esse describat, seu argumenti sedem. Similiter in aliis artibus reperies . . .’

concern the art in question will not concern the species. Thus the definitions are divided out among the arts. Then Eriugena goes on to observe that the being of an argument which resolves a doubtful matter in the nature of things is also a place, or definition. The key words here are ‘in the nature of things’ (*in natura rerum*): the definitions established by dialectical argument are not merely logical structures, but do have a real relation to the things they establish: they are as it were the Forms of these things, the perfection towards which they tend. The thing as known by the mind is more perfect than the thing in its material existence, but the two are the same. Definitions are discovered, not arbitrarily invented. Two maximal propositions are potentially at work here: ‘things whose definitions are different are themselves also different’,⁴⁴ and ‘whatever the definition is absent from, the thing defined is also absent from.’⁴⁵ These propositions establish negatively the identification between thing and definition, on which, of course, Eriugena has improved, by bringing definitions into the nature of things in a positive way.

The differential topic of ‘definition’ also helps Eriugena to establish the true, non-corporeal nature of place. He argues that the usual sense of place is confusing, since it seems to refer to an element of physical space. However, physical space—the world, or air—is a body. Eriugena goes on to observe (475C): ‘if body is a different thing from place, it follows that place is not a body . . . air is not a place [because it is a body].’⁴⁶ The definitions of body and place vary, therefore the things themselves must also be different. In fact, the usual sense of ‘place’ is really a kind of body: human beings at a certain point on the earth are, materially speaking, bodies within bodies (478B):

. . . place is nothing else but the boundary and enclosures of things which are contained within a fixed limit . . . this world with its parts is not a place, but is contained within place, that is, within the fixed limit of its definition . . . bodies are contained within their places, therefore body is one thing and place another, just as the quantity of parts is one thing, their definition another.

⁴⁴ BOETHIUS, *De topicis differentiis*, *Patrologia Latina* LXIV, 1185D.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, 1196D.

⁴⁶ JOHN SCOTTUS, *Periphyseon*, ed. Jeaneau, Book I, 475C, ll. 1432–1434: ‘Nam si aliud est corpus et aliud est locus, sequitur ut locus non sit corpus. Aer autem istius corporalis atque visibilis mundi quarta pars est; locus igitur non est.’

Body belongs to the category of quantity, which is utterly different from the category of place, so place cannot be identified with body,⁴⁷ and therefore any given body—earth, air, and so on, cannot in itself be a place.⁴⁸ The definition of a body is also itself intellectual, since matter is totally formless—for Eriugena here, matter seems only to be a kind of substrate, a purely negative quality: ‘How (. . .) can the matter of a body be the place of a body which is made from it, when even matter is not, in itself, circumscribed by any certain place or mode or form [and] is not defined in any definite way save by negation?’ (488B)⁴⁹

We also see a certain amount of interplay with the differential topic of ‘genus’ here. At 478A, he says:

. . . we should distinguish by careful reasoning between the nature of bodies and the nature of places (. . .) For none of those who rightly consider and distinguish the natures of things confuses places and bodies in a single genus, but separates them by a rational distinction. For bodies are included in the category of quantity, but the category of quantity differs widely by nature from the category of place. Therefore body is not a place, since locality is not quantity . . .⁵⁰

Things whose genera are different are themselves also different. The categories are the ultimate genera, ‘the most general genera’. Therefore, if body is found under the genus of quantity, and quantity is a separate genus from place, body and place must be different. He goes on to observe; ‘. . . this world with its parts is not a place, but is

⁴⁷ Ibidem, 478A: ‘For bodies are included in the category of quantity, but the category of quantity differs widely by nature from the category of place. Therefore body is not place, since locality is not quantity . . .’

⁴⁸ Ibidem, 475C: ‘. . . if body is a different thing from place, it follows that place is not body (. . .) air is not a place . . .’

⁴⁹ Ibidem, 64, 488B, ll. 1964–1967: ‘Quomodo igitur materia corporis locus corporis, quod ex ea conficitur, potest esse, cum et ipsa in seipsa nullo certo loco, seu modo, seu forma circumscribatur, nulla certa ratione definitur, nisi per negationem?’

⁵⁰ Ibidem, 478A, ll. 1521–1532: ‘. . . corporum naturam a locorum natura diligenti ratiocinatione segregemus. Horum namque confusion aut maxima, aut sola est erroris causa multis ac paene omnibus, aestimantibus, hunc mundum visibilem, partesque eius universales atque speciales loca esse. Si enim recta ratione rerum omnium genera acute ac sine ullo errore discernent, nullo modo corpus atque locum in uno eodemque genere concluderent. Nemo enim naturas rerum recte considerantium atque discernentium loca et corpora in uno genere miscet, sed rationabili discretionem segregat. Nam corpora in categoria quantitatis continentur. Categoria autem quantitatis a categoria loci longe naturaliter distat. Non est igitur corpus locus, quia localitas non est quantitas.’

contained within place, that is, within the fixed limits of its definition (. . .) bodies are contained in their places: therefore body is one thing and place another, just as the quantity of parts is one thing, their definition another.' Here we see him bring in another differential topic to nail home the point: that of 'proportion.' Proportion, unlike relation, occurs when the things being compared are not similar, but where there is nonetheless a certain correspondence in terms of their relation to each other.⁵¹ Here we see Eriugena compare body and place to quantity of parts and the definition of those same parts. It is clear that a given number of parts is different from the definition of what they are, so, likewise, it must be that body, which is quantitative, is one thing and its qualitative definition as a place another.

Finally, in response to the *Alumnus*' query as to why, when the equivalence of definition and place is so clear, the custom has arisen of calling earth, air and water '... places, the *Nutritor* eventually concedes that just as things may be predicated of God by a kind of metaphor, so (. . .) all things which are in place can be called places, although none of them is strictly speaking a place but is contained within the place [of its proper nature], (. . .) we see that it is by metonymia (. . .) that those things which are contained are called after the things which contain them (. . .) similarly the things that contain are called after the things that are contained by them . . .'⁵²

Again, the differential topic of 'proportion' comes into play here: insofar as we do this in regard to God, we may also do it in regard to place. God and place are not identified, of course, but the relation of predication to God and things in place to place itself, is similar. It is interesting to note at this point that Eriugena supplements the use of topical theory with the use of a figure: things in place may also be called places because of the nature of language, which uses metonymy, by which the contained is named from the con-

⁵¹ See BOETHIUS, *De topicis differentiis*, *Patrologia Latina* LXIV, 1191B.

⁵² JOHN SCOTTUS, *Periphyseon*, ed. Jauneau, Book I, 480B–C, ll. 1622–1623: 'Si ergo de Deo omnia, quae sunt, non quidem proprie, sed modo quodam translationis, quoniam ab ipso sunt, rite praedicantur: quid mirum, si cuncta, quae in loco sunt, dum majoribus se undique videantur circumfundi, loca possint nominari, cum nullum illorum proprie locus sit, sed loco suae propriae naturae continetur, cumque videamus, per metonymiam, id est transnominatorem, ab his, quae continent, nominari ea, quae continentur, non tamen ita continentur ab eis, ut sine eis intra naturales suos terminos subsistere non possint. Usus siquidem mortalium domum, uxorem, seu familiam solet appellare, cum haec naturaliter distent. Non enim domus praestat uxori seu familiae substantialiter esse, sed naturae locus. Quoniam vero in ea possident, ab ea denominari solent. Similiterque ea, quae continent, ab his, quae continentur.'

tainer. In fact, the figure of metonymy is itself an example of the topic of proportion: the things involved in a metonymy are not similar, but there is a certain relation between them.

The category of place as Eriugena describes it has a number of fundamental characteristics: it is definition, it is identified with the dialectical topic, it is at rest, it is always found with time, it is fundamental to all created things, and finally, there is a sense in which it is the final end and perfection of things. He begins his discussion by asserting that (474B):

... place is constituted in the definitions of things that can be defined. For place is nothing else but the boundary by which each is enclosed within fixed terms. But of places there are many kinds: for there are as many places as there are things which can be bounded, whether these be corporeal or incorporeal.⁵³

Therefore, from the start, place is seen as an intellectual quality, and the usual significance of place will be explained as a kind of metonymy. 'Place' is whatever is characteristic of something, and indeed some idea of Eriugena's sense of the true significance of place can be found in the sense we have that French Canada and English Canada are very different, even when they occupy the same space. One might describe the concise statement of such qualities as a definition, and this definition is the place of a thing. Eriugena re-affirms this at 479D–480A: '... true reason teaches that all these things, sensible as well as intelligible, are contained within their proper places, that is, in their natural definitions',⁵⁴ and goes on to observe that our usual sense of place comes from a kind of metonymy, where the thing contained (the body), is called from its container (the place, or definition of it). Thus the parts of the world which we normally describe as places—France, Ireland, the Himalayas are not materially but intellectually places (481B): '... these aforementioned general parts of the world and the parts of those parts down to the smallest divisions are not places but are enclosed within places ...'⁵⁵ As a result we can say

⁵³ Ibidem, Book I, 47, 474B, ll. 1375–1379: 'Locus sequitur, qui, ut paulo ante diximus, in definitionibus rerum, quae definiri possunt, constituitur. Nil enim aliud est locus, nisi ambitus, quo unumquodque certis terminis concluditur. Locorum autem multae species sunt; tot enim loca sunt, quot res, quae circumscribi possunt, sive corporales, sive incorporeales sint.'

⁵⁴ Ibidem, 53, ll. 1603–1605: 'Haec enim omnia sensibilia, sicut etiam intelligibilia, suis propriis locis, id est, naturalibus definitionibus contineri vera ratio edocet.'

⁵⁵ Ibidem, 55, 481B, ll. 1661–1665: '... has praedictas mundi generales partes,

that place is purely intellectual, and being intellectual, it will naturally be affiliated with the Arts (475B): ‘. . . place exists in the mind alone. For if every definition is in art and every art is in mind, every place, since place is definition, will necessarily be nowhere else but in the mind.’⁵⁶

Given that place is definition, and definition is intellectual, the question remains as to which of the arts is most closely linked with it. Eriugena says that the art of definition belongs to dialectic. There are two reasons for this statement: in the first place, dialectic is the art of division, and of making things precise: dialectic is the art which diligently investigates the rational concepts of the mind. In the second place, of all the arts, dialectic is widest in extension: as we have seen, Eriugena believes that the dialectical structure of the universe—of all that exists—is indicated in Genesis.⁵⁷ Dialectic covers everything that is; the definitions of dialectic are based on concepts that, in effect, are the same as the *differentiae* established by Boethius: genus, species, from contraries, and many others, leaving nothing out. These definitions, in effect, are the ‘arguments’ that establish—i.e. clarify, or define—doubtful matters. The nub of this argument, or definition will be genus, or species, or contraries—in fact, it will be a *differentia*, which makes the ‘arguments’ Eriugena is discussing look very like maximal propositions, and this *differentia* is a place. Thus the ‘argument’ is a place, the *esse* of the argument is a place; in fact, the places are topics. That this is indeed what Eriugena means here seems to be borne out by his practice of dialectical argument, which, as we have seen from the few examples above, is based on the interaction of various topics. The question remains as to what constitutes the rhetorical topic. Rhetoric is the art which deals acutely and fully with a topic defined by its seven circumstances, i.e., it the art which deals with particular cases.⁵⁸ However, if we remember that dialectic deals with ‘most general genera and the most special species’, it becomes apparent that the rhetorical topic is a subsequent to the dialectical one, exactly as it was for Boethius.

earumque partium partes, usque ad minutissimas pervenientes partitiones, non esse loca, sed locis circumscriptas . . .’

⁵⁶ Ibidem, 48, 475B, ll. 1422–1422: ‘. . . non esse locum nisi in animo. Si enim definitio omnis in disciplina est, et omnis disciplina in animo, necessario locus omnis, quia definitio est, non alibi nisi in animo erit.’

⁵⁷ JOHN SCOTTUS, *Periphyseon* ed. Jauneau, Book IV, 748D–749A, XIII–XIV. Cf. also *Periphyseon* Book I, 474D–475A, ll. 1392–1401.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, Book I, 475A, ll. 1403–1406.

The question then arises as to the nature of definition, and who or what it defines things. As far as Eriugena is concerned, only essential definition is true definition (483D): ‘... that alone and truly is to be named definition which is usually called by the Greeks *ousiodes* (that alone) admits for purposes of definition that alone which fully completes the perfection of the nature it defines . . .’;⁵⁹ any other kind of so-called definition is not really definition, but description. Definitions are, of course intellectual (invisible and contemplated with the eye of the intelligence . . .),⁶⁰ and therefore the defining agent must be some sort of intellectual one (485A–B): ‘... the intellectual nature alone, which is constituted in man and angel, possesses the skill of definition (. . .) that which defines is greater than that which is defined . . .’⁶¹ Does an intellect define itself, or is it defined by another intellect? Given that not all things possess intellect, it would seem that things are defined by other intellects, and in fact, Eriugena sees the process of definition as hierarchical:⁶² Definition is a kind of participation in creation also (486A): ‘if every intellect except God is defined not by itself but by that which is above it, no intellect will be the place of itself, but will be placed within that which is above it.’⁶³ It is part of the paradigm of any creature, created by God in the Primordial Causes: man and angels ‘can only be defined by God who made them in his own image.’⁶⁴ It would seem to follow then, first, that when we know the definition of any given thing which we did not create, this is something which we have discovered rather than invented, and second, that when we do make up a definition, either it will be of something we make ourselves, or it will be what Eriugena calls a phantasm, an illusion.

Eriugena divides up the categories according to whether they are at rest or in motion. Place, along with situation, quantity and essence is at rest.⁶⁵ Motion, in fact, is the principle of time, and place and

⁵⁹ Ibidem, 58, 483D, ll. 1769–1770: ‘Sola vero OYCIIAΔEC id solum recipit ad definiendum, quod perfectionem naturae, quam definit, complet ac perficit . . .’

⁶⁰ Ibidem, 484C, ll. 1803–1806.

⁶¹ Ibidem, 60, 485B–C ll. 1817–1818: ‘Solius ergo intellectualis naturae, quae in homine angeloque constituitur, definitionis peritia est (. . .). Majus enim est quod definit, quam quod definitur; also 1823–1832.’

⁶² Ibidem, 61–62, 486A, ll. 1865–1868.

⁶³ Ibidem.

⁶⁴ Ibidem, 60, 485C: ‘Hos itaque ab ipso solo, qui eos ad imaginem suam condidit, defini posse arbitror.’

⁶⁵ Ibidem, 40, ll. 1149–1150, 469A: ‘... four are at rest, i.e. ousia, quantity, situation, place . . .’

time, although obviously not the same thing, are always found together 481B–482A:

... this reasoning which we have taken over from Gregory the theologian and the excellent commentator of his homilies, Maximus: everything that is, except God Who alone properly subsists above being itself, is understood to be in place, with which (...) time is always and in every way simultaneously understood. For it is impossible to conceive place if time is withdrawn as it is impossible too for time to be defined without understanding it in connexion with place. For these are included among the things which are always found inseparably together; and without these no essence which has received being through generation can by any means exist or be known. Therefore the essence of all existing things is local and temporal, and thus it can in no way be known except in place and time and under place and time. For the universe (...) is defined by the ultimate causative Power which is beyond everything and defines everything (...). The place of the universe, then, is its outer limit according to the definition some give to place, saying Place is the boundary outside the universe, or its very position outside the universe, or the comprehensive limit in which that which is comprehended is comprehended (...). Therefore to be after some manner, this is to be in place; and beginning after some manner to be, this is to be in time...⁶⁶

All creatures must be defined in some way: this is their being in place, since the place of any creature is its definition, and likewise, all creatures, by virtue of being creatures, exist in time, since as crea-

⁶⁶ Ibidem, 481B–482A, ll. 1667–1702: ‘Accipe igitur tale ratiocinationis hujusmodi exordium, quam a sanctis Patribus, Gregorio videlicet theologo, sermonumque ejus egregio expositore Maximo sumpsimus. Omne quodcumque est praeter Deum, qui solus super ipsum esse proprie subsistit, intelligitur in loco. Cum quo, videlicet loco, semper et omnino cointelligitur tempus. Non enim possibile est, locum subtracto tempore intelligi; sicut neque tempus sine loci cointelligentia definiri potest. Haec enim inter ea, quae simul et semper sunt, inseparabiliter ponuntur; ac sine his nulla essentia, quae per generationem accepit esse, ullo modo valet consistere vel cognosci. Omnium itaque existentium essentia localis atque temporalis est; atque ideo, nisi in loco et tempore, et sub loco et sub tempore, nullo modo cognoscitur. Non enim omnium rerum universitas sub se ipsa et intra seipsam est. Hoc enim statuere, irrationabile est et impossibile, ipsam videlicet universitatem super suimet universitatem esse, dum circumscriptionem habeat post omnia circumscribentem omnia sub se ipsa, in se ipsa causalissimam virtutem. Ipse itaque finis exterior locus universitatis est, sicut quidam definiunt locum, dicentes: locus est ipse extra universitatem ambitus, vel ipsa extra universitatem positio, vel finis comprehendens, in quo comprehenditur comprehensum. Sub tempore etiam universa comprobantur, quoniam nonsimpliciter, sed aliquo modo esse habent universa, quaecumque post Deum esse habent, ac per hoc non carent principio. Omne enim, quodcumque rationem recipit, alicujusmodi essentiae, etsi est, non erat. Itaque aliquo modo esse, hoc est localiter esse, et aliquo modo inchoasse esse, hoc est temporaliter esse.’

tures, they must have had a beginning, and insofar as they either turn towards the Word or away from it, they are in motion, and this motion is time. Definition and motion are characteristic of all creatures, and they cannot be known except in place and time. God is beyond place and time, but as the cause of place and time, he is called the place and time of all things (468B–C):

God is neither place nor time, and yet metaphorically He is called the Place and Time of all things because He is the Cause of all places and all times. For the definitions of all things subsist in Him as places, as it were; and from him as from a certain moment of time, through Him as through a certain period of time and towards Him as towards the end, as it were, of times, the motion of all things both begins and moves and comes to an end, although He Himself neither moves Himself nor is moved by himself or by another (. . .) place and time are counted among all the things that have been created. For in these two the whole of the world that now exists in comprised and (they are that) without which it cannot exist (. . .) God neither moves nor is defined . . .⁶⁷

Place and time are logically prior to all things that are, not prior as regards creation, but since any thing at all, in order to exist must have a definition and a beginning, therefore we say that place and time are prior to all things that are. In an interesting line, Eriugena identifies place with the mode and measure of all things, which adds an element of harmony to place: place is also the right kind of proportion in things.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ *Ibidem*, 39, 468 B–D, ll. 1122–1138: ‘Non enim Deus locus, neque tempus est; attamen locus omnium translative dicitur, et tempus, quia omnium locorum temporumque causa est. Omnium quipped definitiones, quasi quidam loci, in ipso subsistunt, et ab ipso quasi a quodam tempore, per ipsum veluti per quoddam tempus, et in ipsum veluti in finem quendam temporum, motus omnium et incipit, et movetur, et desinit, dum ipse nec se moveat per tempus, nec ab alio moveatur. Quid enim? Num si proprie locus diceretur et tempus, videretur non extra omnia per excellentiam essentiae, sed in numero omnium, quae sunt, includi? Locus siquidem et tempus inter omnia, quae creata sunt, computantur. In his namque duobus totus mundus, qui nunc est, consistit, et sine quibus esse non potest. Ideoque a Graecis dicuntur, ΩΝ ΑΝΕΥ ΤΟ ΠΑΝ id est, quibus sine universitas esse non valet. Omne enim, quod in mundo est, moveri tempore, loco definiri necesse est; et locus ipse definitur, et tempus movetur; Deus autem nec movetur, nec definitur.’

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, 56, 482B, ll. 1702–1712: ‘Si autem aliquo modo, sed non universaliter ea, quae sunt, habent esse, quemadmodum sub loco esse, per positionem et finem rationum, in quibus secundum naturam sunt, et sub tempore esse, omnino per principium, non ostendentur? Videsne igitur, locum tempusque ante omnia, quae sunt, intelligi? Numerus enim locorum et temporum, ut ait sanctus Augustinus in sexto de Musica, praecedit omnia, quae in eis sunt. Modus siquidem, id est, mensura omnium rerum, quae creatae sunt, naturaliter conditionem earum ratione praecedit.

The Primordial Causes, or paradigms of all things are found in God. Comparison of the nature of the Primordial Causes with these statements regarding place leads one to the conclusion that the place and the Primordial Cause of any given thing are very similar. At times the place or definition of anything seems to be identified with the Form of that thing. We have seen previously that the paradigm of a thing includes both its ground-plan in space, as it were, and its fulfillment in time. Place is at rest, therefore the definition of a thing cannot change as the thing itself changes; change, as motion, is an aspect of time. Therefore the place of a thing is something towards which the thing is moving (470C):

Place is not contained by anything but contains all things that are placed in it (. . .) all things which are in it are rightly always seeking it as their limit and their end, in which it is of their nature to be contained and without which it is understood that they would melt away into infinity. Therefore place is not in motion, since all that is in place moves toward it; but it itself is at rest.

However, it is also the stable element in anything (489A): ‘. . . no creature can be without its own definite and unchangeable place.’ In fact, it functions very like the ‘seat of the argument’ mentioned above, which is the key element in a doubtful matter, both the stable element on the basis of which it can be decided and the real force of the definition established. However, in Eriugena’s eschatological vision, the final destiny of creation is not in fact the achievement of its place, but a surpassing of it 482D: ‘. . . those who participate in the eternal and infinite beatitude will be encompassed neither by place nor by time . . . being infinite they will to infinity adhere in the Cause of all things, which lacks all definition because it is infinite; for only God will be manifest in them when they surpass the limits of their nature . . .’ This should be compared with 470C, where place and time were necessary to things in order that they not ‘melt away into infinity.’ This does beg the question as to whether Eriugena’s

Qui modus atque mensura uniuscujusque locus dicitur et est.’ [If however, the things that are possess being after some manner but not absolutely, how will their being under place not be manifested by their position and the limitations of the reasons in which they are established by nature, and their being wholly under time by their beginning . . . place and time are . . . prior to all things that are . . . the number of places and times precedes all things that are in them: for the mode, that is measure of all things that are created is, in the nature of things, logically prior to their creation, and this mode and measure of each is called its place, and so it is.]

version of the Beatific Vision is a kind of 'melting away into infinity', or whether any kind of individuality is maintained. If any kind of individuality is to be maintained, then the statement above has to be taken as a rather startling metaphor for the transformation of the redeemed at the Parousia—and of course, with Eriugena this kind of startling metaphor is perfectly possible.

From the moment he introduces the ten categories Eriugena links them with dialectic. Having listed them, he observes:

. . . of these ten genera there are innumerable subdivisions. . . it is the function of that branch of philosophy which is called dialectic to break down these genera into their subdivisions from the most general to the most specific, and to collect them together again from the most specific to the most general.⁶⁹

Without the dialectical elements of definition, analysis and synthesis, he could not work out his metaphysic at all; metaphysics gives him the categories, genus and species, but he needs the dialectical definition, analysis and synthesis in order to supply the elements of rest and motion so crucial to the dynamism of his system. Thus we see that dialectic is not merely a function of discourse: insofar as the ten categories are characteristic of all things 'which come after God and are created by Him', they deal with the 'multitude of created things' as well as the 'motions of minds'; as predicables, they are also realities. This reflects Eriugena's position on the nature of language: it is intricately interwoven with reality on all levels, both reflecting and creating (as the Divine Word) the universe. Therefore a predicable cannot be simply an abstract concept, linked to reality only by convention, but if it is to be valid, it must also be real, and any valid operation involving it must also be likewise some aspect of reality. Dialectic supplies the principle of motion to these genera: it moves from the universal to the specific and back again, and this process of division and collection reflects, in Eriugena's view, a real process of procession and return always at work in nature. As noted above, he finds support for this view in *Genesis* itself. Thus any part of dialectic reflects some corresponding structure in the universe. Almost from the beginning of his meditation on the subject then, it is evident that the topic, by this time being treated exclusively as an element of dialectic, must have some metaphysical significance, since it is

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, Book I, 463A–463B.

dialectical, and dialectic is intrinsically linked to the categories. Place is one of the categories, but since place is also the topic, and the topic is a fundamental unit of dialectic, it must be that place is found throughout the categories, and in fact, we find that this is so.

Conclusion

As has been noted, the categories are held to apply to every created nature, that is, the 'multiplicity of things that are', and to the 'concepts of the mind'. Thus they have both an ontological and a logical status, and the two are connected: the logical status (as predicables) is what enables one to know the ontological status (as the universal genera of all things that are). Therefore the 'concepts of the mind' and the 'multiplicity of things that are' are intrinsically linked. This begs the question as to which is prior, and especially which is ontologically prior. As has been noted before, Eriugena combines two very different approaches to language: both an analogical approach, by which language reflects external reality, in which case the 'multiplicity of things that are' would be prior, and an approach according to which language is that by which reality is created, which would seem to make the 'concepts of the mind' prior. In fact, Eriugena reconciles this seeming opposition in the creation of both things and concepts in the Divine Word. The Logos is both the pattern of things that are—the Primordial Causes are in the Logos—and the origin of intellectual concepts, which can probably be identified with the Primordial Causes, although to what extent the Primordial Causes can be identified with these human 'concepts of the mind' subject to the categories is not clear. Certainly they are the origin of such concepts. Therefore one cannot say exactly that external reality comes first, or that language comes first, since both, in fact, are referred back to the same Primordial Causes in the Logos—this is another manifestation of Eriugena's objective idealism. Since both concepts and reality relate back to the same origin, the concepts of the mind do adequately comprehend created reality, which can give the impression that they are creating it. However, the status of the categories as predicables, (predicables which enable one to know them as the universal genera of all things that are), is not in fact an arbitrary imposition of the created mind on created external reality, but reflects the common origin of both.

The question then arises: if the categories as predicables enable one to know, through the operation of dialectic, created being in the multiplicity of its genera and species, what is the relation of the categories to God? Do they enable one to know Him? The answer is difficult, as one might expect. God is simple, and He is also More-than-being, or essence (*superessentialis*) so the categories, being characteristic of Being, in the sense of everything that is created, cannot be thought to be true as such of God. Who is greater than what He has created. However, insofar as He created them, they do tell us something of God, and can be predicated metaphorically of Him: he is the cause of which they are the effects. 'Metaphorical predication' seems to mean a statement that is not untrue, but is incomplete. As with every other element of creation, the categories bear God's stamp: as St. Paul says, God can be known from 'the things that are made', but he is not to be identified with any of them, or, to put it another way, they are the effects of the cause that caused them, which is God. A thing known is not necessarily fully comprehended, and this is particularly true of knowledge gained from symbols or myths, and creation could be described as a symbol of God. In this case, the knowledge of created reality gained through the categories is symbolic knowledge of God, and subject to the same process of negation as all other symbols. What Eriugena appears to be doing here is making the categories and therefore also philosophy itself purely symbolic in relation to God: true, but incomplete. The negative theology which symbolism implies is fundamentally a statement of insufficiency. The categories then, can be predicated in a comprehensive way of created things in that they are the universal genera of these things, and metaphorically of God insofar as He created them.

This is true also of 'place': as a category it can be predicated comprehensively of all things that are, and metaphorically of God. However, place is also limitation, definition and the 'topic' of dialectical and rhetorical discourse; all of these are ultimately identified. This means that the dialectic developed on the basis of the topics is a suitable form of theological discourse: in fact, it is the only possible form of theological discourse. The development of the argument which leads to the identification of the commonplace, or topic, as an element of metaphysics occurs in the context of Eriugena's discussion of the categories. In his discussion of the nature of place, he begins with the category of place, and moves from that through discussion of limitation and definition, all that while employing the

type of non-demonstrative dialectical argument developed originally by Boethius. The metaphysical development from which he starts assumes, in fact, the highly developed Boethian topic, and dialectical/rhetorical 'place' is fundamental to his discussion of metaphysical place as found in the categories. The expansion of what was an aspect of mere discourse, a commonplace from which one could draw an argument, into a fundamental metaphysical characteristic of everything that is, which was inchoate in Boethius, is thus made explicit in Eriugena.

ORFEO ED EURIDICE, PHILOLOGY AND MERCURY:
MARRIAGE AS METAPHOR FOR RELATIONSHIP
WITHIN COMPOSITION

Nancy van Deusen

Introduction: an allegorical narrative

The topic of humanism in the Middle Ages brings up the probing analysis of relationship, both as an entity to be discussed for its own sake, and within communication and composition. Imbedded within the following narrative are all of the elements—presented as they are in a seemingly calm, innocuous, self-evident, even simplistic, manner—of a serious, ongoing, multifaceted study of relationship itself, as well as the use of marriage as a metaphor to discuss connection within composition. Here is the story:

A king of long ago had a son named Ferdinand who never took his nose out of his books. He was always shut up in his room reading. From time to time, he would close the book and gaze out of the window at the garden and the woods beyond, then, resume his reading and musing. Never did he leave his room except for lunch or dinner, or maybe a rare stroll in the garden.

One day, the king's hunter, a bright young man who as a child had played with the prince, said to the king, 'May I call on Ferdinand, Majesty? I haven't seen him for quite some time.'

The king replied, 'By all means. Your visit will be a pleasant diversion for my fine son.'

So the hunter entered the room of Ferdinand, who looked him over and asked, 'What brings you to the court in those hobnailed boots?'

'I am the king's hunter', explained the young man, who went on to describe the many kinds of game, the way of birds and hares and the different parts of the forest.

Ferdinand's imagination was kindled. 'Listen', he said to the young man, 'I too will try my luck at hunting. But don't say anything about it to my father, so he won't think it was your idea. I'll simply ask him to let me go hunting with you one morning.'

'At your service, as always', replied the young man.

The very next day at breakfast, Ferdinand said to the king, 'Yesterday I read a book on hunting which was so interesting I'm dying to go out and try my luck. May I?'

'Hunting is a dangerous sport,' replied the king, 'for someone who is new to it. But I won't keep you from something you think you might like to do. For a companion, I'll let you have my hunter, who is unequalled as a hunting dog. Don't ever let him out of your sight.'

The next morning at sunrise, Ferdinand and the hunter mounted their horses with their guns on shoulder straps and off to the forest they galloped. The hunter aimed at every bird or hare he saw and laid it low. Ferdinand tried his best to keep pace, but missed everything he shot at. At the end of the day, the hunter's game bag was bulging, whereas Ferdinand hadn't brought down so much as one feather.

At dusk, Ferdinand spied a small hare hiding under a bush and took aim. But the rabbit was so small and frightened he decided he would simply run up and grab it. Just as he reached the bush, the rabbit darted off, with Ferdinand close behind. Every time he was right upon it, the rabbit would run far ahead, then stop, as though it were waiting for Ferdinand to catch up, only to elude him again. In the meantime, Ferdinand had strayed so far from the hunter that he could no longer find the way back. Again and again he called out, but no one answered. By now it was completely dark in the forest, and the hare had disappeared.

Weary and distressed, confused and disoriented, Ferdinand sat down under a tree to rest. It was not long before he saw what seemed to be a light shining through the trees. He therefore got up, made his way through the underbrush, and emerged in a vast clearing, at the end of which stood the most ornate of palaces.

The front door was open, and Ferdinand called out, 'Hello! Hello! Is anyone at home?' He was answered with dead silence; not even an echo came back to him. Entering, he found a large hall with a fire burning in the fireplace, and nearby, wine and glasses. Ferdinand took a seat to rest and warm up and drink a little wine. Then he rose and passed into another room where a table was set for two persons. The cutlery, plates, and goblets were gold and silver, the curtains, tablecloth, and napkins were pure silk embroidered with pearls and diamonds; from the ceiling hung lamps of solid gold the size of baskets. Since no one was there, and he was hungry, Ferdinand sat down to the table.

He had scarcely eaten his first mouthful when he heard a rustle of dresses coming down the steps, and in walked a queen followed by twelve maids of honour. The queen was young and extremely beautiful, with a lovely figure, but her face was hidden by a heavy veil. Neither she nor the twelve maids of honour said one word during the entire meal. She sat across the table in silence from Ferdinand while the maids quietly served them and poured their wine. The meal thus passed in silence, and the queen carried her food to her mouth under that thick veil. When they had finished, the queen rose, and the maids of honour accompanied her back upstairs. Ferdinand also rose and continued his tour of the palace.

Coming to a master bedchamber with a bed all turned down for the night, he suddenly realised how tired he was, undressed and jumped under the covers. Behind the canopy was a secret door. It opened, and in walked the queen, still *mute, veiled*, and followed by her twelve maids of honour. With Ferdinand leaning on his elbow and gaping, the maids of honour undressed the queen all but for her veil, put her in bed beside Ferdinand, and left the room. Ferdinand was sure she would say something now or *unveil* her face. But she had already fallen asleep. He watched the veil rising and falling with her breath, thought about it a minute, then he too fell asleep.

At dawn the maids of honour returned, put the queen's clothes back on her, and led her away. Ferdinand also got up, ate a hearty breakfast he found waiting for him, and went down to the stables.

His horse was there eating oats. Ferdinand climbed into the saddle and galloped off into the *forest*. The whole day long he looked for a road that would take him back home, or for some trace of his hunting companion, but he only got lost anew, and when night fell, there stood the clearing and palace once more.

He went inside, and the same things happened as the evening before. But the next day, as he was galloping through the woods he met the hunter, who'd been looking for him for the last three days, and together they returned to the city. When the hunter questioned him, Ferdinand made up a tale about a lot of complicated mishaps, but said nothing about what had really happened.

Back at the royal palace Ferdinand was like a changed person. His eyes wandered constantly from the pages of his book to the forest beyond the garden. Seeing him so moody, listless, and absorbed, his mother began pestering him to tell her what he was brooding

over. She kept nagging until Ferdinand finally told her from beginning to end what had happened to him in the *woods*. He made no bones about being in love with the beautiful queen and wondering how to marry her when she neither spoke nor showed her face.

'I'll tell you what to do', replied his mother. 'Have supper with her one more time. When the two of you are seated, knock her fork off the table, making it appear to be an accident. When she bends over to pick it up, pull off her veil. You can be sure she'll say something then.'

No sooner had he received this advice, than Ferdinand saddled his horse and raced off to the palace in the forest, where he was welcomed in the usual manner. At supper he knocked the queen's fork off the table with his elbow. She bent over, and he tore off her veil. At that, the queen rose, as beautiful as a moonbeam and as fiery as a ray of sun. 'Rash youth!' she screamed. 'You have betrayed me. Had I been able to sleep one more night beside you without speaking or unveiling my face, I would have been free from the spell and you would have become my husband. Now I'll have to go to Paris for a week and from there to Peterborough, where I'll be given in prize at a tournament, and heaven knows who will win me. Farewell! And note that I am the queen of Portugal.'

In the same instant she vanished, along with the entire palace, and Ferdinand found himself alone, abandoned in the thickest part of the underbrush within the deepest, most trackless part of the forest. It was no easy task to find his way home, but once he got there, he didn't waste a single minute. He filled a purse with money, summoned his faithful hunter, and departed on horseback for Paris. They wore themselves out riding, but didn't dismount until they reached an inn in that famous city.

This story then takes its course. Ferdinand, through a series of many toils, snares, and obstacles, in which, ultimately, a hermit coming out of a cave gives him advice, wins, through a tournament lasting three days, the hand of the queen of Portugal. There is a grand wedding, and Ferdinand sends for his mother and father, who had already given him up for dead and gone into mourning. He introduces his bride to them, saying, 'This is none other than the little hare I *pursued*, the veiled lady, and the queen of Portugal whom I have freed from an awful spell. Let us be joyful together, as we celebrate our eternal union.'

On the face of it, our story is an amusing love story, set in a far away, unspecified, place, at an indeterminate time; it has been placed by collectors and folklorists into the so-called 'type' of 'Amor and Psyche', and the story also, even in the twenty-first century, shows how much vitality an imagined 'Middle Ages' retains even today—with its queens, knights, and jousts, carried out eventually, as the prince wins the queen in a tournament, of all places, in 'Peterborough', given the fact that the material for this story was related by a person by the name of Giovanni Becheroni, from the region of Montale Pistoiese, Tuscany. Even in Tuscany, in the nineteenth century, one had heard of the Peterborough fairs. The story, indeed, has been included in a collection brought together some years ago by the writer Italo Calvino, who expressed a sense of amazement, in the preface he placed before his collection, at how 'folk tales' constituted a *material* that, like all materials, contained within itself, by its very nature, attraction. 'I could not forget, for even an instant, with what mystifying material I was dealing', he wrote, and further, 'Meanwhile, as I started to work, to take stock of the material available, to classify the stories into a catalogue which kept expanding, I was gradually possessed by a kind of mania, an insatiable hunger for more and more versions and variants. Collating, categorising, comparing became a fever.' Attracted by the material substance of the 'tales' he was collecting, he reached for more and more, making his own order in the material he brought together, refashioning what he had at hand for his own purposes, much as one might work with clay, or shape bread dough.¹

Medieval principles of composition as humanistic inquiry

Let us look more closely at this narrative used as an available material by Italo Calvino, and then further used as a material for this study, since it contains clues for both much of importance in the Middle Ages, that is, for thoughtful and conscious communication and composition

¹ Cf. CALVINO, *Italian Folktales*, 'The Enchanted Palace' (*il palazzo incantato*), 232–243, 729, taken, and rewritten, from NERUCCI, *Sessanta Novelle*, 59. The entire introduction to this volume, entitled 'A Journey through Folklore' is of much interest. Cf. CALVINO, *Italian Folktales*, xv–xxxii.

as well as artistic production. The story contains a view of works of art as 'marriages' between material and 'voice', between substance and expression. This is a medieval view of the creative process—a marriage to be earnestly desired, persistently sought for, and, eventually consummated. A medieval point of view, there is, nevertheless, a deep continuity with the past, the great textual foundation of antiquity. This is not at all to maintain that 'The Enchanted Castle' reaches back to the Middle Ages. Junctures, associations, and emphases are those of Italo Calvino who in turn has appropriated a narrative composed by a specific person at an identifiable place during the late nineteenth century. Rather, we will look at principles of construction exemplified here, and that, due to the simplicity of the story, open and apparent, can also be clearly found in medieval works. Furthermore, the story is about communication on a basic level, specifically bringing together sound/conceptual substance with appropriate articulation—the medieval humanistic project.

First, the story appears to be divided quite naturally into pieces of material of approximately the same size, or 'chunks' of material. One can, in a written version, emphasise this aspect by means of margins, capital letters, indentations, and paragraphs; but it is not just a matter of outlay and conscious division into units that is superimposed upon the material of the story. The story itself, by the nature of the narrative, or by the internal properties of the material used, divides itself into these chunks, many of which are self-contained. Each presents an autonomous transaction, action, or piece of information that is made clear by means of a delineatory gesture, phrase, description, idea, or self-contained action. The chunks also, as they occur, one by one, convey a sense of motion, of onward directionality. One is taken along, even captivated, by the way in which the story moves, chunk by chunk, and one is also, at the same time conscious of this movement, since each chunk has a principal figure that identifies the chunk, registers the movement, and delineates both chunk and action.²

The 'king' is such a figure, who provides a delineatory outline for the opening chunk, constituting a *figura*, to use a term that also brings out the underlying motivational aspect of the narrative passage, the 'reader' (Italo Calvino remarked in his notes, that he himself fashioned

² I have described this process in more detail in VAN DEUSEN, *Theology and Music*, Chapter VIII, 'A Theory of Composition and its Influence', 127–145, especially 133, 141. Cf. also 'copula', 40, 60, 64, 106, 132, 169.

the prince to be a reader, who reads both day and night), the 'hunter', the 'hermit in his cave' and, of course, the 'queen', all given shape by a delineatory feature, or by the fact that kings and queens, generally, are understood to have certain consistent features such as kingliness and queenliness, dignity, largesse, and the power to give orders. There are also the delineatory shapes or 'figures' (*figurae*) of palace, forest, meadow, town, city, and cave. It is fascinating to notice how each chunk is carefully given a distinctive, identifiable format by its own delineatory figure as one traces them, one by one. In fact, the entire story, as it moves along its course, can be seen to be an 'alphabet' of figures—an entire collection of 'varied and diverse figures.'³ Just as the letters of the alphabet are combined into syntax—into syllables, parts of speech, and sentences—so the varied and diverse figures of this alphabet of recognisable, even stock, characters present themselves, either singly or combined, within the syntax. The connected motion of the narrative moves along, figure after figure, to the end of the story, with a sense of inevitable, inexorable, resolution.

The importance placed upon the 'forest', too, is not by chance, nor coincidental, it would seem, since it recurs again and again. Into the forest the prince and the hunter ride, the hare takes the prince deeper and deeper into the forest, until the prince is fully confused and lost in the chaotic, disorderly, thicket of underbrush within the deepest portion of the woods. The palace emerges suddenly as an organised, recognisable, structure within the forest, and the hermit emerges from, hides behind, goes back to, and reenters the forest. The hermit also comes out of, and goes back into, the cave. All of this is told in utter simplicity, so that a child can ride along with the narrative, captivated by its motion that draws one along to the next happening, the next 'chunk' or module of material. The story then offers—almost without the reader's awareness of the process—an example of particular, self-contained modules (or chunks), and of the connection between these modules (the Latin *copula*, or 'coupler'), as well as the motion necessary for moving from one module to the next until, finally, one stops, and that is the end of it.

The story then tells us a great deal, and thus serves as an exemplification for a conceptualisation of composition as relationship. The story is also about communication, and about how human beings

³ For the concept of 'varied and diverse figures', cf. VAN DEUSEN, 'Medieval *Charivari*', and VAN DEUSEN, 'Scholastic Antics', 191–222.

make or fashion artistic works, most of all, to communicate. It is not easy to communicate effectively—to bring together most felicitously and appropriately content and voice, but rather, this copulation must be earnestly sought after. In ‘The Enchanted Castle’ the queen neither ‘spoke nor showed her face.’ Both the narrative above, as well as medieval mental culture, present an agenda to discuss and understand the process and capability of uniting mute and covered phenomena, or things, in this case, human things, that consist of substance and are measurable, together with communication that is comprised of actualisation and articulation. Material that is patently visible but silent needs to be communicated, so that we can learn something from it, as the queen must be released from a ‘spell’ so she can communicate and show her face.

This is the great medieval humanistic project, that of communication. We find it also in the story of Orpheus and Euridice, retold over and over again in the Middle Ages, in which Euridice, who as silent material substance, is banished to the underworld as the result of her death, thus becoming not only silent, but unseen. Orpheus, who is the ‘voice’, goes off searching for her and it is nip and tuck, with dangers, toils, and above all, snares, until he finds her, bringing her up to the surface of the earth in some versions, and losing her, finally, in others. The manuscript versions of this story, throughout the Middle Ages are abundant, and, obviously, the tale of Orpheus and Euridice is still important, relevant, and serving the same purpose of disclosing the difficulties of bringing word together with substance.⁴ This particular story, about the marriage of communication and material substance is unforgettable, so ubiquitous and universal the problem.

Let us explore further this medieval view of resources, material, and the links of composition. First of all, the point that has been made above, that it is not of little importance that the story takes place in a forest. The forest is, in fact, a priority throughout the story. Ferdinand, for example, finds himself again, after that comfortable, commodious, palace—where he had, for a time, enjoyed food, drink, a warm fire, and a good night’s rest—had completely vanished, in the thicket of underbrush, in the darkest, thickest, part of the entire

⁴ For example, in Monteverdi’s opera ‘La favola d’Orfeo’, published in Venice in 1609, reprinted in 1615, the Baroque composer Telemann’s ‘Orfeo’, Josef Haydn’s ‘Orfeo ed Euridice’ of 1791, and Offenbach’s ‘Orpheus in the Underworld’, first performed in Paris, 1858, as well as Stravinsky’s ballet, ‘Orpheus’ produced in New York City for the first time in 1948.

forest. This important chunk is one that we meet from the beginning of the tenth century, with Remigius of Auxerre and his commentary on one of the most important and influential, although difficult to understand, works of late Antiquity, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* of Martianus Capella. It is hard to understand why this work, written third century C.E., was quoted, or referred to—with chunks of its material incorporated into still further works—so frequently and consistently throughout the Middle Ages. But the reason may very well have been that the work deals with the same topic as ‘The Enchanted Castle’, namely, that of uniting material substance with communication. Again, another similarity between ‘The Enchanted Castle’, and *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* is that both use the allegorical way of moving, or mode (*modus*).⁵

The title shows this, that is, the ‘marriage’ between verbal communication (Mercury, the messenger), and substantial, as well as, *conceptual* substance (Philology), the real ‘point’ of ‘The Enchanted Castle’. The marriage, however, is also one that occurs within, and between, songs, music, and words. This is clear from the beginning lines:

Sacred principle of *unity* amongst the gods, on you I call,
 you are said to grace *weddings* with your song;
 it is said that a muse was your mother.
 You *bind* the warring seeds of the world with *secret bonds* and
 Encourage the *union* of opposites by your *sacred embrace*.
 You cause the elements to *interact reciprocally*,
 And you make the world fertile.
 Through you, Mind is breathed into bodies by a *union of concord*
 Which rules over Nature, as you bring *harmony* between the sexes,
 And foster loyalty by love.⁶

⁵ Cf. REMIGIUS OF AUXERRE, *Commentum in Martianum Capellam*.

⁶ MARTIANUS CAPELLA, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, II, 3–4. Cf. the chapter on ‘Harmony’: Concluding this stirring symphony, impossible to describe, Harmony turned to Jove and, lending her voice to a new melody and meter, began the following hymn: ‘I worship you, O Jupiter, resounding with heavenly song; through you the sacred swirling of the heavens has set the glittering stars in predetermined motion. You, all-powerful Father of the multifarious gods, move and bind kingdoms beneath your scepter-bearing diadem, while Mind, which you instill with heavenly force, revolves the universe in ceaseless whirl . . . Thus Nereus can know the limits of the seas, and the fiery bodies of the sky can draw nourishment, so that dissonant elements may not teem with strife, that parts remote may cherish lasting bonds and always dread the ruptive forces of Chaos. Ruler of the heavens, best Father, gathering the stars in fond embrace, you quicken your offspring with eternal Bodies. Hail! For you our lyre is attuned, for you the gamut of our song resounds in double diapason.’ MARTIANUS CAPELLA, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, II, 353–354. For a discussion of this pivotal concept of harmony, see GERSH, *Concord in Discourse*.

Although the purpose of the work is open and apparent, that is, unity, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* otherwise certainly needs elucidation, since it is filled with *integumenta*, or covered allusions that have to be picked away at in order to set free the real 'nugget' of meaning, just like the queen, who, in 'The Enchanted Palace', is both veiled and silent, and one must consider well what tactic would be appropriate in order to cause her to reveal her identity and significance.⁷

Again, as in 'The Enchanted Castle', *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury* also eventually comes around to the forest in a passage that would be especially singled out in the Middle Ages. In fact, as in 'The Enchanted Castle', the real action and point of the story begins with the forest:

Amidst these extraordinary scenes and these vicissitudes of Fortune, a sweet music arose from the trees, a melody arising from their contact as the breeze whispered through them, for the crests of the great trees were very tall, and, because of this tension, reverberated with a sharp sound; but whatever was close to and near the ground, with drooping boughs, shook with a deep heaviness of sound; while the trees of middle size in their contact with each other sang together in fixed harmonies of the duple (2.1), the sesquialtera (3.2), the sesquitertia (4.3) also, and even the sesquiocitava (9.8) without discrimination, although semitones came between. So it happened that the grove poured forth, with melodious harmony, the whole music and song of the gods.⁸

This passage is of much interest for several reasons. It was also widely quoted in the Middle Ages. First, the passage, as mentioned,

⁷ Many twentieth-century authors have shown both distaste and impatience at the amount of work required to wrest communication out of this work, including, amazingly, the English translators of *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, who we can compare to the king's wife, counseling Ferdinand to resort to trickery in order to short-circuit an apparently tedious process and compel the queen to speak. This distaste for a work that was clearly of great importance to medieval thought-culture shows that when we attempt to understand a mentality of the Middle Ages, we are, in a sense, taking a journey into a foreign land in which our underlying assumptions cannot be taken for granted and simply accepted without reflection.

⁸ MARTIANUS CAPELLA, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, II, 9f. Cf. REMIGIUS OF AUXERRE, *Commentum in Martianum Capellam*, I, 86f. See also the twelfth century *Metamorphosis golliae episcopi*: 'Circa ima nemoris aura susurrabat,/ cuius crebro flamine nemus consonabat,/ et ibidem gravitas rauca personabat,/ sed a pulsu mellico tota resultabat./ Circa partis mediae medium ramorum,/ quasi multitudinem fingens tympanorum/personabat mellicum quiddam et decorum/et extremo carmine dulcius alorum.' Cf. WRIGHT (ed.), 'Latin Poems', 21-30; HUYGENS, 'Mitteilungen', 764-772; BENTON, 'Philology's Search', 199-217; VAN DEUSEN, *The Harp and the Soul*, Chapter I ('The Problem of Matter, the Nature of Mode and the Example of Melody in Medieval Music Writing'), 1-45.

takes place within the forest, and this is not by any means coincidental. Secondly, music is introduced for the purpose of showing how music itself by its very nature as using sound substance illustrates and exemplifies realities that are invisible, abstract, or otherwise difficult to understand with just the proper nuance of understanding. 'Duple', 'sesquialtera', 'sesquitercia', and 'sesquioctava' all refer to common musical intervals, the building-blocks of musical composition (and this is true not only for Western music, but for other world musical cultures as well, not only in late Antiquity, and the Middle Ages, but today), the octave, the perfect fifth, the fourth, for example, showing how actual musical material and the measurement of sound can both be incorporated into a treatise on communication, language, and composition, and fully exemplify what is at stake. Material sound substance (music) is combined with word. Thus totally different entities of invisible sound 'stuff' that could be measured by proportional measurements, could be 'harmonised', that is, brought into concord through motion and time, with language. Thirdly, the passage seems to have been considered to be of importance, since it was quoted often and in many contexts throughout the Middle Ages. The passage therefore indicates to us after a lapse of several hundred years, a mental culture. In other words, both the principle involved and its exemplification in musical intervals were indications of what was regarded as valuable throughout the Middle Ages.

This forest, *The Marriage of Philology and Mercury*, is full of trees. They are of various and diverse sizes and shapes, and one can only imagine all of them together, forming a canopy obscuring, in some places, the sky, or the fallen branches and those close to the ground, together with the underbrush, making up a thicket of assorted branches, dead leaves—in short, all of the material that a forest produces, year after year. Without pathways, it is extremely difficult to make one's way. One can go round in circles, or give up, standing stock still. The sheer material itself, rich a resource as this may be for a whole variety of purposes, such as making fires, furniture, houses, or perhaps providing nuts to eat, as one walks along, can suddenly, especially if the forest closes in on one, become daunting, as well as confusing, if not downright dangerous.⁹

⁹ The basis for the analogy of forest for a disorderly, unlimited, unshaped material resource, within Latin conceptualization, proceeds from the translation of the Greek *hyle* to the Latin *silva* in Chalcidius' Latin translation of Plato's *Timaeus*, a translation

Our tenth-century writer, Remigius, brought the forest to mind as a rich resource that attracted attention, inviting appropriation. On the other hand, at the end of the period generally considered as the 'Middle Ages', the fourteenth-century writer, Dante, expresses the other point of view—the forest as incoherent and confusing—in the opening lines of his great epic work concerning the course of the world, and the ways of God and man, as he writes:

'When in the midst of my course of life,
I found myself in a dark opaque forest,
and found that I had lost my way . . .'
(*'Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
mi ritrovai per una selva oscura
ché la diritta via era smarrita . . .'*)

Dante's 'dark, opaque forest' here is the forest of clutter of material possibilities, the undergrowth of myriad thoughts, the tangled branches that obscure the sky, blocking out the light. Surely, as he wrote this, Dante was abundantly aware of the fact that the scriptures of Old and New Testaments together had often been described as a dark, opaque, thicket, full of possibilities, in which one could easily lose one's bearings and sense of direction. In this rich resource of infinite possibilities available to him, the task that Dante had set before himself, as with any medieval writer or composer, was that of helping himself to the material at his disposal, selecting various and diverse *figurae*, and finding a way, with time, patience, and hard work, through the tangled thicket of thoughts, memories—as well as a lifetime of reading other's thoughts—in fact, of unlimited possibilities that were largely unseen, though real, that offered themselves to the composer. The writer or composer then, as well as today, is a 'connector' or 'coupler' of words with conceptual substance, faced continuously with the difficult task of bringing together, and persuasively uniting, communication with the material to be communicated.

of obvious importance throughout the Middle Ages. Although the translation of the Greek text was completed by Ficino, the text translated by Chalcidius remained relatively unchanged by the fifteenth-century humanist translator. Cf. CHALCIDIUS, *Timaeus*, 167. 6; 273.15–16; expanded upon in a more extended section of Chalcidius commentary, chapters 268–354. Obviously, *silva* as a translation for the *hyle* was an outstanding priority for Chalcidius—one he felt himself to be under constraint to justify in a lengthy discourse. Cf. WINDEN, *Chalcidius on Matter*, esp. 23: ' . . . Therefore, Chalcidius' lengthy chapter on material/silva is actually more than a treatment of one of the two principal subjects . . . It is, in point of fact, the fundamental part of his entire commentary.' See also VAN DEUSEN, 'In and Out' (forthcoming).

The Book of Psalms also served as a great repository, a mighty and vast source of possibilities, movements, figures, both of sign and of thought, or contrary positions and reactions resolved into concord, of emotions. The Psalms constituted, for medieval composers, a *forest* that was opaque with tangled branches, a welter, even clutter of resources. And everyone helped themselves: those who broke apart the building blocks of the Psalms and placed them together again in what we know as 'Gregorian Chant', as well as Peter Abelard in his 'Planctus Davidis', who all appropriated the phrases of the Psalms, its language, expressions, and emotional substance.¹⁰ The 'material' of the Psalms, in chunks, was available to all, and each helped him or herself, according to purpose and mastery. The 'order' (*ordo*) of the Psalms, too, could be worked with, with chunks taken out of context, and repositioned, in order to enhance a topic and make a point. The Psalms, loaded as they were with communicational possibilities, as a great 'voice' was available to be joined to other sound material—distinct musical tones.

Relationship reconsidered: the marriage between disciplines

We return to 'The Enchanted Castle', where we found all of the issues that have been brought up, one by one: material substance that is unlimited and disorderly as it is found in the world, blocks or chunks of this material, as well as the idea of separating portions of an otherwise chaotic substance, the concept of order itself, and the union or 'marriage' between substance and its communication, as well as the ways in which this communication can take place. In this investigation, what is interesting—even amazing—is that there is, in a sense, no cleft between learning and amusement, no separation between education and experience. All of these attributes that make up a composition were to be found in an amusing story that had apparently been told time and again, reworked, collected, and recently published. The narrative furthermore, could, with some reflection, be applied to incidents one might encounter in real life

¹⁰ The topos of the Old and New Testament scriptures as an opaque thicket full of possibilities, but bewildering and confusing as well is one that is found often enough in medieval writings as to constitute a commonplace. For the presence and influence of the Psalms in medieval education, composition, as well as social protest, see VAN DEUSEN (ed.), *Place of the Psalms*.

experience. As the result of one's own engagement with the story, one could select—pick out—and reflect on the details of 'The Enchanted Castle' in order to apply them to one's own time, place, and individual, recognisable circumstances, and, in fact, this process is exactly what makes the story worthwhile. In other words, what we have here is not, on the one hand 'school', and on the other 'story', but rather a story that makes sense, yet is, along the way, making one point after the other. One is also given, almost surreptitiously, an entire toolchest full of tools—tools for thinking, for analysing, and tools, as well, for expressing oneself. These tools also have to do with materials and how to measure them, as well as how to speak of them. One could also consider this toolchest as empowerment for human expression, not only as this work of bringing together conceptual substance with verbal expression is articulated—as we have seen—in the Middle Ages, but within the discipline of 'folklore' as well, as this discipline has developed in the last two centuries. Accordingly, what we are dealing with here could be considered basic research on an elemental humanistic-anthropological level, thus interesting and useful.

What tools do we have in mind, and how can these tools be applied? We find, first of all, the notion of *particular* things. We meet early on, *particular* people, *particular* figures with *particular* qualities about them that make them recognizable, so that when they appear again, we know why. A king, prince, queen, hunter, hermit—all of them are single figures, yet all together present a spectrum of varied and diverse figures. We can see them before us with the eye of the imagination; but the same principle can be made clear within the two subjects that discuss particulars, namely the study of grammar as a communicational field, discussing both single letters or figures, as well as all of the letters of the alphabet, or varied and diverse figures. The parallel material discipline is arithmetic, that, in terms of material substance, discusses measurement in terms of single numbers, such as the number (or figure) one, two, and so on. So, we see a marriage coming to pass between communication and material in terms of particularity as this concept is presented as letters of the alphabet, or exemplified by numbers that refer, most often, to an actual, seen, material thing.

In 'The Enchanted Castle', we also noticed connections that were presented repeatedly. In fact, without connections, there would be no story at all. We noticed, first of all, the connection between the

king and the prince, then the prince and the hunter, the prince and his mother, and so on, until this connection broke down. All of the connections, one by one, during the course of the story were based on physical presence as well as exchanged dialogue—people spoke to one another, and confronted one another. Their faces were turned toward one another. Not so with the ‘Queen of Portugal’ whose face was veiled, and her lips were sealed, so that, in spite of the fact that her material physical presence was in the room of the palace, even in the bed of the prince, it was impossible to make connection with her—neither by eye-contact nor by verbal exchange. Her face had no features because it was veiled, and she had no *figura*, since her body was heavily shrouded. The break-down in communicational connection made the point of the connection that much more drastic.

This specific example could lead to the study of connection, or relationship in general. One of the reasons why we are able to make sense of the story is that there is also a logical connection, to a certain extent, between the chunks as they occur one by one. The study of logic gave one tools to describe how this was, or could be, the case, and focused upon connection within written and spoken communication. One, again, used figures to explain and delineate what it was that one had in mind, both figures of speech and figures of thought (as Quintilian, as well as Cassiodorus, classified them),¹¹ such as comparisons, analogies, and metaphors. Logic’s parallel study dealt with connection as it occurs in, and can be exemplified by, geometry, a study that also dealt with very practical and completely substantial matters, such as the measuring and surveying of plots of land, and whether one’s neighbour had built a fence on one’s own property or not. Connection, both as abstraction, and as a practical reality, was plain to see in terms of connected lines within geometric figures (again this word, *figura*), and in the practical reality of pieces of land, in which, of course, a miscalculation or the absence of correct connection could end up in a court of law. So, again, communication and material were united as a marriage in terms of two disciplines that dealt with a common project, that is, relationship, on the one hand, as communication or logic, and, on the other, as material and measurement within geometry. And again, one learned by means of figures, both singly and in terms of varied and diverse figures, word

¹¹ Cf. QUINTILIAN, *Institutio Oratoria* for a discussion (throughout the four volumes of the work) of ‘figures of speech’ and ‘figures of thought’.

and thought *figurae* in logic, and triangles or heptagons in geometry.

Finally, in 'The Enchanted Castle', if there was one thing to be noted, it was motion, as well as diverse qualities of motion, more or less constantly throughout the story. The prince rides out into the forest, rides further and further into the forest, rides back home, rides back into the forest, rides into the thickest part of the forest, rides back home, rides to Paris, and rides to Peterborough, where he participates in a tournament, jousting each day. We are confronted with motion continually. We are also brought into contact with the motion that is set up by communication; the motion, so to speak, of thought and word, as both are exchanged between the varied and diverse figures that mark out the plot. These figures make the plot move along. Again, the concept of figure, both as a single figure, as well as varied and diverse figures, are essential for the movement of the story, the movement of discussion amongst the figures, and, especially, the physical movement of actual bodies moving from place to place. That movement itself is much more important than realistic measurement of distance, and mode of transportation, is seen by the fact that no mention in the story is made of the necessity of ships for conveying the queen and prince from Paris to Peterborough. The nature of motion is obviously more at stake here, than precise details or attributes of this motion.

'The Enchanted Castle', again, presents for our view a pair of disciplines that give us tools for understanding what motion is all about. The first of these is communicational, teaching, and bringing to the attention of all, ways or modes of speaking and writing so that effective motion is set up, and an audience is convinced and energised, rather than sent off to sleep. Internal motions, or *emotions*, are aroused so that actions are effected and feelings are affected. This, in a nutshell, is the science or discipline of rhetoric, and those who communicate effectively, or move the emotions of crowds are rhetoricians. Rhetoric, as Quintilian in his four books of rhetoric was pleased to point out, also depended upon the use of figures to make points—figures such as metaphor and analogy, but also example, ridicule, and irony, either one at a time, or as varied and diverse figures. All were effective, and Quintilian lists them one by one, as there are many of them.

Rhetoric's parallel discipline that also dealt with movement, but in terms of material and measurement, was the science of moving physical bodies, or astronomy, and physics. Figures were also of

much importance for this science, as astronomers linked stars into constellations and found figures in order to recognise and describe 'The Big Dipper', or 'Orion', and 'Cassiopeia'.

This is a system of studying basic principles of reality, such as particulars, connections, and movement in pairs, thus bringing the communication necessary for teaching and learning together with the physical realities and certainties of number, connected lines that could delineate plots of ground, and physical motion. What we have described was current as a system of education that combined mental tools—dealing with written letters, numbers, diagrams, and drawings, all of which would have been united within the Latin word *figura*—with life itself, as it could be observed. Augustine describes this system in *The Order that Exists Among the Disciplines*.¹² Chalcidius describes this in his commentary on Plato's *Timaeus*, and this system of parallel disciplines was, in turn, a foundation under, and background for, thinking, teaching, and learning for the entire period of the Middle Ages. In fact, what we have described would have been completely recognisable well into the twentieth century. In other words, if all of this seems unrecognisable, the lack of familiarity is very recent indeed, gradually taking place within the last fifty or so years.

Those who discuss these connections constitute a compendium of medieval humanism: Quintilian, Augustine, Chalcidius, Cassiodorus, on to Remigius of Auxerre, Robert Grosseteste, and Roger Bacon in the thirteenth century. These had a common persuasion, namely, that music formed a bridge between communication, and material and measurement—between the communicational disciplines and those that dealt with real 'stuff'—and the unseen, but also very real 'stuff' of life itself, or soulish substance. Music stands, then, between 'voice' and 'stuff', between expression and the substance of expression. In other words, music is the marriage bond between what one says and what one knows, combining both.

Music, by using the unseen substances of time, sound, and motion, exemplified *life* as an unseen, nevertheless, utterly motivational force. For this reason music was studied in medieval education, and continued to be regarded as the 'analogy discipline' to be studied by

¹² AUGUSTINE's treatise *De Ordine*, as well as *De Musica*, both written apparently shortly after his conversion, are found in Volume 32 of the *Patrologia Latina*. There are no recent editions of either of these important treatises. Cf. the lemmas 'Music, Rhythm', as well as 'De Musica', in: FITZGERALD (ed.), *Augustine Through the Ages*.

every school child, right on to university training as this was formulated in the thirteenth century, first in Paris and at Oxford, and then throughout the continent of Europe. Music disclosed realities that could otherwise be understood only with great difficulty, or not at all. ‘Nothing can be understood, except through music’, wrote Augustine in his treatises *De Ordine* as well as *De Musica*, written in close succession; and it seemed that a humanistic project of the Middle Ages was, at least in part, devoted to coming to terms with, and actually implementing, what Augustine meant by this.

Here follows a medieval example for our priorities of material, delineatory *figura*, and movement:

MS Paris BN Fonds Latin 1118 contains a series of *figurae in modis* that indicate and communicate ways of moving and understanding. The series begins, as we have, with the ‘kingly figure’ (Plate I). Notice that throughout the series (Plates II–IX), motion is accentuated by means of the *figurae* of music instruments, colours, and gestures, all coming together in the last of this series (Plate IX), in which dance, too comes to the fore. The *figurae* appear to contain, and to communicate as well, internal, emotional motion, in terms of facial expressions, limp, hanging hands (or, more obviously, red hands), and, again, musical instruments. It is important to keep in mind that instruments were also designated as *figurae* in the Middle Ages. All of these illustrations have been included here, since they, in their individuality, each as a single *figura*, as well as all together as ‘varied and diverse figures’, or *charactere variatae*, illustrate the points we have been considering.¹³

The place of music in medieval humanism

There is an amazing shift from ways in which music is regarded today. Rather than providing a pleasant diversion after a hard day at work, reassurance for weary travellers in a huge and hectic airport, a soothing, relaxing ambience for eating and drinking with friends in a restaurant, or a presence in an empty house for those who live alone, music for medieval people made difficult things plain,

¹³ See the ‘Varied and diverse *Figurae*’, as well as illustrations for the concept *figura in modis*, MS Paris BN Fonds Latin 1118, ff. 104, 105r, 106r, 107r, 109, 110, 111, depicted at the end of this article, with courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale.

and opened their eyes to understand the secrets of the universe. Music pried open the hard shell that covered truth. No other field of learning shared this distinction, and no one really challenged this capacity of music to make principles of particularity, individuality, and motivation plain.

But day in day out music was actually *sung* and also *played*. Each time this happened, in churches, in courts, in schools, by the very nature of music and language as using sound substance, a coalition—a conspiracy, a marriage—was set up between the *figurae* of letters in the texts that were at the same time sung, together with the *figurae* of music notation. This coalition was especially meaningful to those who actually did the singing, since one learned by actually doing. Each day, every day, the principle of particularity in terms of tone, as well as individual sound of, for example, the vowel *e*, as well as the *connection* simultaneously, between the letters that followed, one after the other, and the tones that did exactly the same thing, made both particularity and connection abundantly plain. Furthermore, as one moved from one letter and tone to the next, one experienced *motion*, in the same way as one experiences food when one eats it. Everyone *sang* particularity, relationship, and motion. Each one experienced these basic principles, as they thought about them as children in schools. In a sense, it was the best education possible, since it combined knowledge with experience, showing how, ultimately, what one knew needed to be both communicated and put into action. A system of learning could be fully understood because it was applied in very conscious ways to life.

We have confronted another mental culture, not to remark upon how obsolete it might seem, but to learn from it. As with all cultures to which we are not accustomed, we find some aspects that seem strange, even irrelevant, and others that seem so self-evident as to be boring. Seen and experienced from the outside, the particular, even peculiar, combination of the exotic, the boring, the tedious, and the newly-discovered, is what gives any culture its uniqueness. We can also be expanded by such a confrontation, and should not give up if it requires patience and effort on our part. But one other considerable reason why it is not easy to understand another culture—one that we do not intuitively know from years of experience within that culture—is one of separation and joining. Medieval mental culture, so far as we are able to tell, makes no separation between ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’, but looks, rather, at life as unified. What one

might regard today as 'secular' education, as completely disassociated from going to church, practising a religion, or observing a family background that includes traditional religious customs, is not at all the case for the mental environment we have been discussing. Rather, the principles one learned in school, for example, of particular letters of the alphabet, or the quality of a single number, were all strengthened by singing particular notes and the recognition of the particular and unique sounds of tones as one sang during a church service. An illustration of the basic principles of particularity (individual tones), relationship (tones associated in melodies), and motion (movement made clear as one sang one tone after another), was offered, and reinforced, by the entire liturgy. Another separation that we, perhaps, take for granted, namely, the division made between 'folk' and 'art' music, is also not to be found in medieval mental culture. Still another separation that is common today, but not to 'them' is the distinct separation between knowledge and life. If one couldn't apply what one had learned in some way to life, it wasn't worth much, and if one couldn't apply what one had learned to life, one hadn't really learned anything at all.

We have travelled into a distant land, where familiarity, rather than guiding, may mislead us. There is something to be gained there; their insights can teach us, and that, at any rate, we are able to understand ourselves and our own mental, spiritual, and intellectual environments the better for having been elsewhere. In this 'elsewhere', music has a particular place, and also points the way.

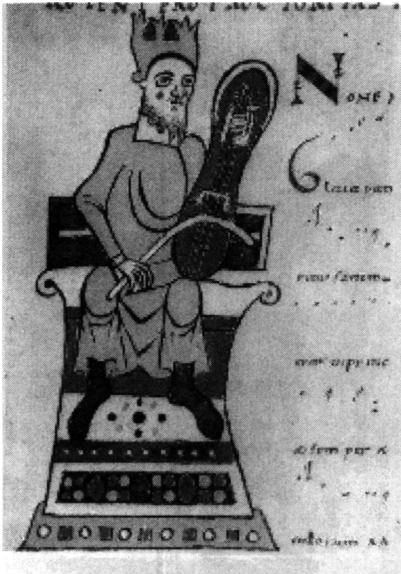


Plate I



Plate II



Plate III



Plate IV



Plate V



Plate VII



Plate VI



Plate VIII



Plate IX

ELECTIVE AFFINITIES:
LOVE, HATRED, PLAYFULNESS AND THE SELF IN
BERNARD AND ABELARD

Marinus Burcht Pranger

Introduction: in search of an interiorised and subjective self

In his memoirs, *Tainted by Experience*,¹ the British musical mogul John Drummond—former director of the Edinburgh festival, the BBC Proms and controller of BBC Radio 3—recounts his many meetings and dealings with the French composer and conductor Pierre Boulez. Ever since the latter's rise to celebrity in the early fifties, in the musical world at large, the two have known and, Drummond supposes, appreciated one another. They were on first-name terms right from the beginning of their acquaintance and Drummond does not hesitate to describe their relationship as one of friendship. Yet he adds an interesting caveat to this characterisation. It may have been Pierre and John all right but, suppose they were to converse in French rather than in English, would he, for his part, dare address his friend with the *tu* rather than with the formal *vous*? Confronting Boulez himself with these musings, the great man's reply was hardly forthcoming: 'Yes, I know what you mean.'² In fact, rather than reassuring him with regard to the intimate nature of their relationship, this answer reinforced the suspense of Drummond's hesitancy.

Boulez's self-containment, at once proud and casual, goes back a long way, longer, at any rate, than the emergence of the humanist self and the *uomo universale* at the end of the Middle Ages. At the same time it is quite recent, particularly in its very Frenchness. As such it could just as well have been said by General de Gaulle no less than by prominent Jansenists such as Saint-Cyran, Arnauld and Pascal, moralists such as La Bruyère or La Rochefoucauld or, further back still in time, by someone who can to some extent be seen as the progenitor of them all, Montaigne. If we skip, for a moment, the

¹ DRUMMOND, *Tainted by Experience; A Life in the Arts*.

² DRUMMOND, *Tainted by Experience*, 148.

Renaissance proper, in Boulez's self-awareness an echo can be heard of Abelard's—another Frenchman's—*ingenium*,³ including its boastful and playful aspects.

These (imaginative) antecedents of Boulez's remark are all the more interesting because of their diffuseness. Behind the Frenchness looms perhaps some Renaissance sensibility, but one might as well think of Augustinianism—e.g. Fumaroli's highlighting of the Augustinian strands in French seventeenth-century literature—⁴ and the older and all-pervasive Stoic and Christian-Stoic mentality. I am stressing this element of diffuseness since, in my view, history both before and after the Renaissance has suffered—and is still suffering—from being judged, as far as its 'humanist' aspects are concerned, from a Renaissance point of view (*regardless* of the question whether or not such a judgement does justice to the historical nature of the Renaissance itself). Two components feature prominently in this assessment: the discovery of the individual and the mastery of the self and the universe. The hold of this 'historiographical' notion of Renaissance over history is still so strong that not only do earlier attempts at upgrading twelfth-century medieval humanism with the epithet 'Renaissance' bring to the fore a relationship of anachronistic dependency. Also a recent work such as Richard Southern's torso *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe* is apologetic in its claim that, unlike the prevailing view of post-medieval scholars so far, scholasticism is to be seen as part and parcel—and, in some respects, even as the major part—of the one and only Renaissance by which Europe was shaped. The core of Southern's thesis is that scholasticism was undeservedly discredited by historians of the Renaissance and later periods because it was seen as a degeneration into technicalities at the end of the Middle Ages; it is crystal clear to him that there is no discontinuity and that both the organised knowledge of scholasticism in the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries and the subsequent study of *litterae humaniores* constitute the 'unification of Europe':

If the distinction [between 'scientific' and 'literary'] I draw is correct, then—far from disappearing after about 1150 to re-emerge in Petrarch

³ *Ingenium* is used by Abelard as a description of the combined forces of his intellect, wit and brilliance. The most illuminating passage is to be found in the episode in the *Historia calamitatum*, in which Abelard boastfully takes it upon himself to comment without delay on a difficult text from Ezekiel *non per usum sed per ingenium*. ABELARD, *Historia calamitatum*, ed. J. Monfrin, 68–9.

⁴ FUMAROLI, *L'âge de l'éloquence*, 623–46.

two centuries later—the scholarly humanism of the early twelfth century should be regarded, not as the first shortly-lived expression of Renaissance-type humanism, but as the first expression of a scientific humanism which went on developing for two hundred years until it was submerged in a sea of doubts and contradictions in the schools of the early fourteenth century, to reappear with very different presuppositions in the scientific developments of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. When scholars from Petrarch to Milton derided the aridity of scholastic aims, they did so because they knew the medieval schools only in their period of doctrinal disintegration—very different from the period from Hugh of St. Victor and Abelard to Duns Scotus and Dante, whose works all display great systematic boldness and desire to extend human powers to their utmost. It is this which makes it the precursor of modern scientific humanism—but with this great difference—: in its medieval form, scientific humanism did not reject the supernatural but looked on it as the final, however imperfectly knowable, end and goal of all intellectual enquiry.⁵

Ironically,—at least seen from the viewpoint of his immense accomplishments in the study of monasticism, in particular of his much beloved Anselm of Canterbury,⁶ and its contribution to the ‘making of the Middle Ages’⁷—by focusing on humanistic progress as of a certain point in history, Southern forces himself to set a mark of discontinuity and to label the preceding, monastic period as not yet up to the anthropological and scientific turn: ‘A monastically based world-view is necessarily supernatural in its orientation.’ Here again Southern uses the unfortunate expression ‘supernatural.’ And, revolutionary though Anselm’s demonstration of God’s necessary existence by ‘entering into the chamber of his mind’ and using dialectical means may have been, its context was a world that, bent on ‘preserving and then very slowly building upon the past,’ was soon to wither away. But, momentarily, Southern cannot withstand the temptation to interpret Anselm’s discovery in the terms of an emerging ‘humanism’: ‘Suddenly to find new things so close at hand, and so central to human aspirations, was a revelation of the powers that lay within the human mind.’⁸ A revelation to whom? Not to Anselm, at any rate, as Southern readily admits:

⁵ SOUTHERN, *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe*, I, 21.

⁶ Cf. Southern’s two major works on Anselm: *Anselm and his Biographer* (Cambridge 1963) and *Saint Anselm; A Portrait in a Landscape* (Cambridge 1990).

⁷ Cf. SOUTHERN, *The Making of the Middle Ages*.

⁸ SOUTHERN, *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe*, I, 26–7.

Anselm himself did not see his discovery in this light. So far as he was concerned, he had discovered by an intense effort, and by God's grace, something that would have been self-evident to a mind not clouded by sin. God had momentarily removed the cloud, and he saw. From Anselm's point of view, the most important lesson of his discovery was the extent of human frailty, and it encouraged a great pessimism about the efficacy of human effort. But in this reaction Anselm was going against the grain. Already by the 1130s, St. Bernard, who would have thought himself an enemy of humanism, was basing his whole programme of spiritual growth on the ancient maxim, 'Know thyself'. In pursuit of this programme, Bernard found a positive value in self-love, and his programme for growing in the knowledge and love of God was based on the gradual refinement of self-love until it developed into love of one's neighbour, and by further refinement, love of God. Here then, in an unexpected source, we find an appreciation of the self at the root of a new programme of spiritual growth, beginning with human nature in its most unpromising aspect of self-love, and ending in the most refined forms of love of others and ultimately God.⁹

Southern's wishful reading of an embryonic notion of humanism into someone like Anselm, whose monastic and Augustinian pessimism is supposed to prevent him from further confidence in the human mind, is quite telling. Like the use of 'supernatural', we have a category here with a rich history, but one that had not yet been brought to light in Anselm's days. Nor would it be applicable to thinkers such as the Chartrians or even to John of Salisbury, all of whom have traditionally been singled out as 'natural' philosophers or humanists *avant la lettre*, the letter, that is, of later humanism including its roots in Antiquity. The progressive feature of this otherwise 'conservative' monk rapidly evaporates if we realise that even Southern's remark with regard to Bernard's so-called humanism is not entirely to the point in that the self that is called upon to know itself is basically no other than the Augustinian self as established in Augustine's *Soliloquia* (God and the soul) or the *Encheiridion* ('no one is allowed not to know that he is alive') and whose task it is to construct and reconstruct the self as rule- and discipline-bound. It would, moreover, be quite a category mistake to sever the optimistic from the pessimistic self either in Augustine or in the Augustinian and monastic traditions.

In my view much would be gained if we were either to dispose of the term twelfth-century 'humanism' altogether or use it in a much more inclusive way while at the same time trying to be more pre-

⁹ SOUTHERN, *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe*, I, 27.

cise with regard to its meaning. Here the Boulez-story may be of some help. Containing all shades of self-consciousness, remoteness and control, Boulez's remark testifies to the presence of the self as a microcosm that seems self-sufficient. Yet behind this mask of privacy and self-sufficiency another feature can be detected that comprises all the others, and that is discipline.¹⁰ Here self-consciousness and 'being a world all to oneself' are far from being claimed as the lawful domain of the creative artist as someone who, ultimately, does not share the life of common mortals such as managers and agents. It is rather the presentation of the self as entitled to room for 'objectivity' that sounds through in Boulez's clever and, in a sense, witty remark. This proper domain of the artist does not single him out as a prophetic figure but links his self to the 'creative' use of rules (including their distortion and reconstruction). It is in this confrontation with rules that the mastery, control and self-sufficiency of the human subject are established, grow and make themselves public. This is not the place to point out that this concept of the self does not necessarily contradict the Augustinian notion of interiorisation which is thought to underlie to such a great degree the emergence of the 'humanist' subject (even in the eyes of history's protagonists—such as Petrarch—themselves). So much may suffice here: Boulez's 'tough' notion of the self articulates as it were the soft underbelly of humanism as the privileged realm of subjectivity and interiority, bringing to the fore its problematic status. Regardless of how the history of *that* self may have really looked, in my view many of those labelled so far as the 'forerunners' of the modern self should rather be assessed within the wider context of the relationship between the self and discipline. The introduction of Boulez was meant to illustrate, first, that this intertwined presence of the self and discipline has a long pre-history; second, that the one, discipline, is not necessarily detrimental to the other, the self; and, third, that perhaps, speculatively speaking, from a historical point of view, the purely interiorised and subjective self has never existed as such.¹¹

¹⁰ For an interesting discussion of the notion of discipline in medieval monasticism (in particular, in Bernard of Clairvaux) see ASAD, *Genealogies of Religion*, 125–71.

¹¹ In the best book on this subject, TAYLOR, *Sources of the Self*, the medieval period is conspicuously and regrettably absent.

'Elective affinities' between Abelard and Bernard

All this was necessary to manoeuvre ourselves into a position from which some light can be cast on elective affinities between Bernard and Abelard. While Abelard has mostly been seen as an innovator in the field of logic and in his 'poetic individuality',¹² less attention has been paid to the relationship between those two elements. Admittedly, much has been written about Abelard's contribution to monastic practice (both in his correspondence with Heloise and in his poetry). But much of this attention is based on the assumption that Abelard, after his fateful adventure with Heloise, has basically changed, from wandering scholar into Benedictine monk, from boastful and brilliant logician as well as songwriter to the poet of interiorised devotion. Yet in my view it may make sense to link the early *ingenium* of Abelard to the later focus on (monastic) discipline as indeed that *ingenium* itself was based on the mastery of an artistic discipline, logic. Although Abelard ended up being utterly dismissive of the 'filth' and empty playfulness of poetry writing, this does not imply that the notions of *ingenium*, talent, rule, discipline and play were disconnected either on the separate levels of logic, literature and living or as part of the integral culture of learning and religion. Needless to say, Bernard has been viewed as opposed to all this: *ingenium*, frivolous poetry, learning, boasting, brandishing them as ever so many transgressions of set rules and discipline.

In focusing on 'elective affinities' between Abelard and Bernard I do not want to deny the novelty—so emphasised by Southern and others—of Abelard's accomplishments. What I do want to bring to the surface is the fact that much of this novelty, rather than *still* being a part of the old monastic culture, can be seen as the continuation of a development that had been subtle and complex for a longer period than many a historian has dreamt of.

I take my point of departure in an article by Peter von Moos about the correspondence between Abelard and Heloise.¹³ The long and short of that article is that Von Moos interprets the correspondence as an exercise in monastic discipline and consolation, emphasising the unity of the work whose coherence rests precisely

¹² Cf. DRONKE, *Poetic Individuality in the Middle Ages*, which has a chapter on Abelard.

¹³ MOOS, 'Le silence d'Héloïse et les idéologies modernes,' in *Pierre Abélard-Pierre le Vénérable*.

on its monastic structure. It cannot be said that Von Moos' argument has found much favour with Abelard scholars. The vehemence with which some of them have reacted is more telling about the compartmentalisation of scholarship, however, than about the rights or wrongs of Von Moos. John Marenbon, for one, has taken Von Moos to task.¹⁴ It seems hard for Marenbon to suppress his irritation with regard to Von Moos's ingenuous efforts to present the letters of Abelard and Heloise as literature rather than as a historical and biographical document and to call on scholars and readers 'to refrain from biographical surmises which in the absence of further evidence can only reflect their own prejudices.' (p. 93) For Marenbon, this stance smells of postmodernist, literary theories which 'treat texts as if they were not the products of their authors, but independent signifiers, awaiting the reader to interpret them in one of the unlimited ways in which they can be understood.' This approach is irrelevant when a historical question is at issue. 'Either Heloise did or did not write certain letters.' As far as that question is concerned *tertium non datur*.

Of course, there is no denying that Marenbon is right here, as he always is and will be as long as it is possible to phrase the question, as he does, as an 'either or'. As for the problems concerning the authenticity of the letters, I feel neither competent nor inclined to deal with them.¹⁵ But even to an outsider it is evident that within the rules of that historical game the question whether or not Heloise wrote the letters attributed to her does make sense. However, in my view that does not mean that an assessment of the letters as the one made by Von Moos from a rhetorical point of view is necessarily ahistorical, or to put it in Marenbon's words:

When the evidence for a position fails, there lies open another resort for its advocate: to shift the discussion to a higher plane of abstraction. Whether or not the considerations adduced are relevant, or themselves sound, such a move will confuse the opponents and lend an illusory strength to views which are indefensible. It would be unfair to accuse Peter von Moos . . . But this, though unintended, has been in practice the consequence of his adducing ideas from recent critical theories in his discussions of the authenticity of the letters.¹⁶

¹⁴ MARENBN, *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard*.

¹⁵ The most recent study of this problem is MEWS' comprehensive *The Lost Love Letters of Heloise and Abelard*.

¹⁶ MARENBN, *The Philosophy of Peter Abelard*, 92-3.

If the issue of authenticity is central, then this criticism is legitimate. But does Von Moos indeed focus exclusively on disentangling this particular knot? I would have thought him to be more ambitious than that. What he aims at in his several publications on the letters of Abelard and Heloise, as indeed in his entire *oeuvre*, is to approach the matter from a rhetorical-literary point of view. In the process, he weighs and reassesses the exact meaning of concepts such as love, sadness, passion and consolation the historical development of which has been in the way of interpreting them in their twelfth-century, (semi-) monastic context. In so doing, he is not necessarily right, and, attractive though his proposal may be to characterise Heloise's 'silence' after the fifth letter by the rhetorical figure of *apostopesis* (*reticentia, praeteritio, praecisio*), it also sounds too beautiful and too subtle to be true. Not always does Von Moos succeed in avoiding the impression of over-refinement. Yet his suggestion that Heloise's literary behaviour fits in with the theory of *penthos* taken in its monastic appearance of 'hiding her grief and waiting for other remedies' in line with Abelard's suggestions (456), has a distinct ring of plausibility—perhaps not necessarily as a precise characterisation of the letters, but certainly as an indication of the general mood of monastic sadness, resignation and consolation as developed in the course of the correspondence.

Marenbon's vehement criticism is indicative of a more general historiographical problem, which is reason why I think it makes sense to linger over his views in what otherwise would have been an excess of attention. To put it crudely, the history of philosophy and theology has been such as to enable historians of ideas to treat their subject matter as a set of ideas and arguments provided in a clear-cut fashion by the author. As for the historian, he does not have to account for the framework within which those ideas operate because, as in the case of Abelard for instance, the arguments are there in the shape of arguments. They do not have to be distilled from a broader, reflexive discourse. It is in that context that Marenbon seems to have written his book on Abelard, and as such it is brilliant and exemplary of its kind. But there is more.

Abelard's playfulness

While on the face of it the argumentative way of writing seems unproblematic, a closer look reveals other dimensions, even in the

one-dimensional field of logic and 'argumentative' ethics, such as the playfulness of the *sic et non*. Here we have an element of play, theatre and drama. But play is not always without the notion of despair and sadness, and drama may easily turn into tragedy. And, behind this playfulness and its dramatic effects looms the problem of subjectivity and *ego*. Exactly what does the *sic* look like and exactly what kind of distance is created through the *non*? Who is the man or woman in charge? It is easy to agree on the view that things are not as simple here as suggested by Bernard of Clairvaux—or, to be more precise, what seems to me a deficient reading of Bernard—who seemed to know what the *sic* of tradition and the Fathers contained. But, then, like Abelard, Bernard loved to play and jest, and, as far as the serious reading of Scripture and the Fathers was concerned, nothing was sacred to him. So, contrasting the conservative Bernard with the progressive Abelard, is just begging the question. Beyond Bernard's playful staging of the certainties of faith and tradition is more playfulness. Searching for a fixed point that might serve as a basis for comparison or contrast (with Abelard) would result in an infinite regress into the vast fields of the playful mind. Rather than talking psychology here we face the perplexities caused by the skills of the master-rhetorician.

Both Peter von Moos and Michael Clanchy have contributed to a better understanding of the problem of playfulness. Both have written about the aspect of jesting in Abelard and emphasised its importance for a proper assessment of the work and person—as one phenomenon: the person-work—of Abelard. This notion of 'oneness' of work and man says a lot about the problems one faces when tackling the work (argument), its shape (logical, sophistic play) and the author; *pace* Michael Clanchy who had to face this unity when writing his biography of Abelard.¹⁷ Clanchy has solved the problem by dividing the different aspects of Abelard's life into different roles, thus enhancing the theatrical nature of the life as a whole. 'Literate', 'master', 'logician', 'knight', 'lover', 'man', 'monk', 'theologian', 'heretic', 'himself', all of them held together as it were by 'knowledge', 'experience' and 'religion' constitute the life of someone who apparently did not coincide with any one of those aspects yet lived them all to the full. Although Clanchy discusses Abelard as a jester only under the rubric of 'knight', there is no doubt that something of the theatrical, including the comic and the tragic, is running through his

¹⁷ CLANCHY, *Abelard; A Medieval Life*.

entire life. The being 'dissimilar from himself' which Bernard accused him of, is not necessarily as negative a characterisation as it looks at first sight. Augustine, not the least of the Church Fathers, had phrased his own 'history of calamities' in similar terms ('having become a question to himself,' his mind split into different uncontrollable wills).¹⁸ Besides, the monastic tradition abounded with language of self-accusation which, although supposed to be no joking matter, was no less vehement for all that. Admittedly, Abelard himself, who had once prided himself on being the author of frivolous love songs sung in the streets of Paris, came to regret his past and to 'condemn poets as a class, along with 'jesters and other singers of filth.'¹⁹ But what difference did it make? Bernard, for one, did not see the difference and scorned Abelard's pretence to self-knowledge as implied in the title of his book on ethics, *Scito teipsum*, as yet another manifestation of the old lightheartedness: 'It were better for him to know himself in accordance with the title of his book; he should not exceed his measure, but get to know sobriety.'²⁰ Clanchy adds the following collorary to this judgement:

Here was another Greek idea, that of the mean or balance which gives equilibrium. Abelard was unbalanced, in Bernard's opinion, because he was a braggart and a jester, whose playing about with dialectic in his youth led him on to playing the fool with holy Scripture in his dotage. Although Bernard justified playfulness as a path to seriousness in his own case, he thought Abelard's little games had gone too far and had ended in insanity.

Simply opposing Bernard to Abelard would be easy if we knew exactly what the 'mean or balance' was. True, in claiming the right to accuse Abelard of having overstepped the boundaries set by the Fathers, Bernard pretends to know what 'the path to seriousness' looks like. But are things as simple as that? Are the monastic discipline and doctrine Bernard resorts to really as clear-cut and fixed as he would like us to believe? For that to be the case an external body of evidence should be at hand (such as the Bible or the writings by the Church Fathers) whose ritual and interpretative use could be distinguished from the distance the reader and commentator need

¹⁸ AUGUSTINE, *Confessiones* VIII, xi, 21-x, 24.

¹⁹ CLANCHY, *Abelard*, 134.

²⁰ CLANCHY, *Abelard*, 332.

to bring that body to life. It is precisely this interpretative distance (and proximity) that makes it so difficult to assess the nature of joking and jesting. Of course, authoritative texts up to the twelfth century should not be seen anachronistically as the swamp-like material for lawless deconstruction. That does not mean, however, that those texts—and, following those texts, the possibility to discern a ‘mean’ and, following the ‘mean’ the existence of a self—were ever objective in the more modern sense of the word. Analogously, there was no subjectivity either, no autonomous self at liberty to play around with a supposedly well-established authority.

As one might expect, it is in logic, the discipline in which Abelard excelled, that the element of play became most risky as well as most offensive to those who were either unwilling or unable to participate in the game. Whilst the playfulness of the new poetry associated with Abelard’s mindset (the Archpoet and others) could in a sense boast of a longer, lyrical tradition of parody, the game of logic, in particular when applied to religion, was prone to be experienced as a breaking away from set standards and discipline. This is all the more surprising since it is not the element of playfulness that marked a change in tradition but rather the nature of discipline itself. Anselm of Canterbury, for one, had been no less experimental, witty, daring and playful than both Abelard or Bernard were to be. It is the nature of discipline—as the combination of doctrine and the (monastic) way of life—that was about to change, not primarily as far as the rough outlines of its contents were concerned but, rather, with regard to its functional coherence as a body of either reformed monasticism or scholastic discipline or devotion *tout court*.

In all those manifestations the ‘mean’ was less fixed and stable than Bernard’s rhetorical hyperbole would seem to suggest; and it is precisely this fluidity—in spite of the pretence of fixity both monastic and scholastic—that creates problems as to the status of playfulness and, by implication, to the status of interpretation, re-enactment and implementation of tradition and discipline and, finally, of the ‘gaps’ that inevitably emerge between the interpreter and the body of interpretation.

Peter von Moos, in his *Geschichte als Topik*,²¹ is very precise with regard to the historiographical implications of his efforts to characterise

²¹ Moos, *Geschichte als Topik*.

the kind and the shape of language spoken by his protagonists, in this particular case, 'modern' logicians such as Abelard whose playfulness Huizinga had already compared to the older Sophistry (Sophistik):

They look like a game, an important, at the same time also a dangerous game, yet a game, particularly since the confrontation of the deepest objects of faith and dogma with a merely formal, in a sense 'sporting', sophistry explains why those 'serious' games of the new logicians—*exercitia* rather than *ludi* or even *ioca*—are not a popular object of medieval studies. It is hard to translate them into modern concepts, both religious and aesthetic; they neither correspond to the seriousness of an absolute religion nor to our idealistic definition of playfulness in terms of a meaningful aimlessness.²²

Von Moos hits the nail on the head by pointing to the fact that medieval religion was not as absolute as post-medieval religion, both Protestant and Roman-Catholic. Yet this does not mean that the games being played to underpin its logical and rhetorical structure were, like a Mozart melody, freely floating in the air (*zweckfrei*). The implications of what Von Moos is saying here present us with one of the most formidable challenges in understanding the medieval mind. Not surprisingly, historians, in order to get some grip on the past, need a minimum of fixity, an aim (a *Zweck*). Such a fixity can be found in the seemingly unmoveable categories of a philosophical or religious framework such as scholasticism or the set rules of rhetoric, the rule of faith, the rule of the monastic life respectively. Within that framework games can be played of *sic* and *non*, of comic inversion, of joy and despair. But exactly what do games look like that are not aimless/*zweckfrei*? Conversely, it would be an illusion to think

²² 'Sie zeigen den Charakter eines Spiels, eines ernstern, eines gewichtigen, mitunter sogar gefährlichen, aber eben doch eines Spiels', insbesondere, weil darin die tiefsten Glaubensgehalte und Dogmen mit dem Denken als solchem in rein formaler, gewissermassen 'sportlicher' Sophistik-Vergleich. . . lässt vermuten, warum 'diese sehr ernstern Spiele' der neuen Logiker—mehr *exercitia* als *ludi* oder gar *ioca*—in der Mediävistik kein bevorzugter Identifikationsobjekt darstellten: Sie lassen sich weder religiös noch ästhetisch in neuzeitliche Begriffe übersetzen, scheinen weder dem Ernst einer absoluten Religion noch unserer idealistischen Spieldefinition von der 'sinnvollen Zweckfreiheit' zu entsprechen. Sie befremden entweder als formalistische Spielereien und Spiegelfechtereien (man kan sich hierfür auf die bereits mittelalterliche Kritik mehr mystisch ausgerichteter Theologen berufen), oder sie enttäuschen als unechte Spiele, als blosse Spielübungen, nicht Spiele der Dichter und 'paradiesischen Menschen' in der seligen Entbundenheit von allen Lebenszwecken ('wie eine Mozartmelodie'). Moos, *Geschichte als Topik*, 283; cf. HUIZINGA, *Homo ludens*, 144 ss.

that the framework of regulated life and thought would be really fixed and stable (having a fixed *Zweck*), although history has shown considerable differences with regard to the degree of fixity and stability. Equally, it would be illusory to assume that 'games of the poet and paradisaical man in a blessed detachment from focus and direction like a melody of Mozart' could be realised and should not be part of the Romantic fallacy.

Romanticising readings

While we are on the subject of Romanticism, it is a well-known fact that not only the history of Abelard and Heloise but also the confrontation between Bernard and Abelard has suffered from romanticising readings in which the tables of appreciation were turned. If Bernard had once seen himself—as he was seen by others—as the defender of the faith against the dangerous experiments of emerging scholasticism, it was now Abelard's turn to hold the spotlight. Whilst Bernard's doctrinal 'mean' was dismissed as sterile and authoritarian, attention now focused on Abelard's combined adventures of love and logic, the fond memory of which triumphantly materialised in the tomb in the *Père Lachaise* cemetery. Thus the picture emerged (and persisted) of the nasty religious conservative, Bernard, versus the heroic defender of reason. There is no need to go into detail. A quick look at Von Moos' definition unveils the anachronistic nature of such views, the particulars of which no longer play a role in modern research but the echoes of which can still be heard, not least in the scornful treatment Bernard is usually given by philosophers and philosophically minded historians.

Affinity of mood

Now if we apply Von Moos' concept of twelfth-century playfulness caught between fixity and freedom, chemistry of a kind can be detected between the two antagonists, Bernard and Abelard. What obtains for playfulness, by implication also does so for hope and despair, love and hate. In short, if there is any 'elective affinity' between the two men, it is one of mood. That being said, we are once more confronted with a historiographical problem since mood

is not to be understood as a merely psychological category. Rather, like playfulness, it is situated between the rule of (monastic) life, rhetoric and faith on the one hand and the freedom and distance, the alienation and joy of reflection, meditation, acceptance and rejection, hope and despair on the other.

For reasons of space I focus on one passage from Bernard, the famous characterisation of Abelard in Letter 193:

Master Abelard, a monk without a Rule, a prelate without care neither keeps order nor is he being kept by order. The man is dissimilar from himself, inside a Herodes, outside a St John, altogether ambiguous. In no respect does he resemble a monk except in name and habit. But what business is that of mine? 'Everybody will carry his own burden' . . . He oversteps the boundaries set by the Fathers . . . He is a man who exceeds his measure . . . There is nothing he does not know of all things in heaven and on earth except his own self.²³

Let me make one thing clear: I have no wish to deny the maliciousness of Bernard's manoeuvring against Abelard (malicious, even in terms of the period itself). It was Bernard who had Abelard condemned and not vice versa. So, if Abelard's complaints, in the *Historia calamitatum*, about his many persecutors sound paranoid, there is here no denying the reality of it all. As for Bernard, there is no reason to assume that he was not serious with regard to the heretical nature of Abelard's teaching. But what exactly does 'serious' mean? Like Abelard, Bernard was a *ioculatur* and just as Abelard's passionate play with logic and love songs is part and parcel of his 'identity' as revealed in his writings, so Bernard's rhetorical playfulness—if only in the guise of a hyperbole—cannot—or cannot without difficulty be separated from a supposedly more serious content. If then Bernard accuses Abelard of being a monk without a rule, dissimilar from himself, a monk only in name and habit, it would be silly to label this as just invective playfulness. There is no doubt that Bernard, in his own view, had a case. But what are we to think of the fact that much of what is presented here as an accusation can be found in

²³ 'Magister Abelardus, sine regula monachus, sine sollicitudine praelatus, nec ordinem tenet, nec tenetur ordine. Homo sibi dissimilis est, intus Herodes, foris Iohannes, totus ambiguus, nihil habens de monacho praeter nomen et habitum. Sed quid ad me? UNUSQUISQUE ONUS SUUM PORTABIT. . . . Transgreditur terminos quos posuerunt Patres nostri . . . Homo est egrediens mensuram suam . . . Nihil nescit omnium quae in caelo et quae in terra sunt, praeter seipsum.' BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, *Epistola* 193, *Sancti Bernardi opera*, VIII, 44–5.

Bernard's work as self-accusation? Of course, one cannot help but think of the famous lament in Letter 250:

Time has come to think of myself. My monstrous life and my bad conscience cry it out to you. As far as I am concerned, I am the chimera of my age. Long since I have ceased to live the life of a monk; all I have kept is its habit.²⁴

And as far as the 'boundaries drawn by the Fathers' are concerned, here too there is no reason to take this statement as an 'aimless' (*zweckfrei*) exclamation. Here too Bernard can be assumed to have had a case. But are those *termini* as fixed as Bernard's hyperbolic language seems to suggest? Elsewhere I have tried to demonstrate to which degree notions such as tradition and the *termini* imposed by the Fathers that cannot be transgressed without impunity are fluent.²⁵ Far from being fixed they are being developed and coined in the process of reading, meditation and interpretation. In fact, they are an intrinsic part of that process itself. As a result, we might speculate that what Bernard felt threatened by in Abelard's behaviour was a competitive process of playfulness that was bound to undermine his own room for manoeuvring in defending a 'fixed' orthodoxy in terms of dogma and church teaching.

Monastic playfulness

Let me try briefly to characterise the Bernardine culture of monastic playfulness focusing on the care of oneself—to use a Foucault-like expression—which Abelard is accused of having overdone ('of all the things in heaven and on earth he knows nothing but himself').

At the end of his long letter to the canon Oger, Bernard evokes the image of the monk as *ioculator*.²⁶ Leaving the world and inverting all that is considered normal and desirable, the monk looks like the jesters and acrobats 'who with their head downward and their feet upward stand on their hands or spring up and down. Thus they

²⁴ 'Tempus est ut non obliviscar mei. Clamat ad vos mea monstruosa vita, mea aerumnosa conscientia. Ego enim quaedam Chimaera mei saeculi, nec clericum gero nec laicum. Nam monachi iam dudum exui conversationem, non habitum.' BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, *Epistola* 259, 4, *Sancti Bernardi opera*, VIII, 147.

²⁵ PRANGER, 'Sic et non: Patristic Authority Between Refusal and Acceptance'.

²⁶ BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, *Epistola* 87, *Sancti Bernardi opera*, VII, 224–31.

make sure they have everyone's attention.' In monastic terms this act consists of humility achieved through humiliation of the self. Further to disentangle the intricacies of that act Bernard quotes Paul:

The apostle frightens me when he says, frightened himself: 'But I leave off [refrain from boasting], so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me.' How nicely does he say: 'I leave off (*parco*).' He does not spare himself who is arrogant, nor does he spare himself who does it with pride or longing for vainglory or boasting of his own actions. Such a person boasts of what he is or tells lies about the self that he is not. Only he who is truly humble spares his own soul. In order to avoid thinking he is what he is not, he wants to be ignorant of what he is in as far as his self is concerned.²⁷

Obviously, what we have here is dissimilarity of a kind as well as an explanation why the self is never to be taken for a fact but always as a dynamic *viator*. Behind and beneath this self is an abyss of terror and darkness the flight away from which toward hope and light is without end. But it is not without reason that Bernard is frightened by the Apostle's refraining from boasting. In one of those astonishing, poetical moves that sometimes occur in Bernard—and which are reminiscent of the reflective intensity of Abelard's poetry—he discovers a dimension in the text that charges it with a power it secretly possesses. The biblical text does not say so but Bernard seems to hold that the apostle is being frightened himself (*terrītus*). In my view, Bernard has very well caught the subtleties of Paul's rhetoric: '*parco*/I leave off' is nothing but the proud utterance of the apostle/monk who has mastered the rhetorical-monastic game of humility through humiliation. As such it is reminiscent of the boldness of Abelard's appeal to his *ingenium*.

In his early treatise *De gradibus humilitatis et superbiae*, Bernard had given a brilliant example of the long way down, describing as *mea descensio* the vicissitudes of the monk tumbling down Benedict's lad-

²⁷ 'Terret me Apostolus, qui et ipse terrītus dicit: PARCO AUTEM, NE QUIS ME EXISTIMET SUPRA ID QUOD VIDET IN ME, AUT AUDIT ALIQUID EX ME. Quam pulchre dicit: PARCO. Non parcit sibi arrogans, non parcit sibi superbus, non cupidus vanae gloriae et iactator actuum suorum, qui vel sibi arrogat quod est, vel mentitur de se quod non est. Solus qui vere humilis est parcit animae suae, qui ne putetur quod non est, semper quantum in se est, vult nesciri quod est.' BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, *Epistola* 87, 11, *Sancti Bernardi opera*, VII, 230. Cf. 2 Cor 12:6: 'For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that which he heareth of me.'

der of humility. Rather than sticking to the straightforward climbing up the ladder of humility as described in the Rule of Benedict, Bernard presents his reader with a reverse picture of silly sinners who, going downhill all the way, meet their more serious colleagues on their way up. Whereas the 'Benedictine' steps mark the itinerary from the fear of God to the love which banishes fear, Bernard's ladder shows the picture of monks deteriorating from curiosity down to habitual sin. Funny those pictures certainly are, consisting as they do of a number of caricatures such as the monk who 'when the others are resting in the cloister stays by himself to pray in the chapel. By coughing and groaning and sighing he makes sure that those outside can hear that he is there in his corner.'²⁸ But then again it should be realised that this monastic vice of *singularitas*, like all the others, is but a shadow of the virtuous monk on his way up (or vice versa). *Mea descensio* means that it is one and the same monk who is sticking to monastic discipline and at the same time overstepping the set boundaries. As a result, there is a sense in which this account of the failing self may be called Bernard's very own *historia calamitatum*. Of course, he is not serious. But what does 'serious' mean in the twelfth century? Even if Von Moos is proven wrong in labelling the entire dossier of the letters of Abelard and Heloise as a monastic exercise, there is no denying that the search for measure and *terminus* plays a prominent part. Yes, Abelard's insistence on the brilliance of his *ingenium* is to be called boasting. But as yet we are as little able to establish the measure, the aim (*Zweck*) of this boasting as we are to pinpoint the nature and scope of Bernard's humility. All we know about the two men is that they have been moving between terror and fear, love and hope, not 'aimlessly' but somehow tied, in a process of attraction and withdrawal, to a pattern of religion and discipline, life and language.

Conclusion

Ironically, what did survive in the end was fixity, what Von Moos calls 'absolute religion', both in the guise of theological orthodoxy and learned scholasticism, and, one might add, humanism as a stated

²⁸ BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, *De gradibus humilitatis et superbiae* XIV, 42; *Sancti Bernardi opera*, III, 48-9.

confession of the self. What utterly disappeared was Bernard's monastic culture as he himself had helped to shape it in its ultimate manifestation of playfulness as well as Abelard's daringly logical variant of that culture.

Yet, however floating and aimless playfulness may have become in the course of time (has it really?), the complexities of the problem as formulated by Von Moos have never been completely forgotten. It is not only Boulez's remoteness with regard to the personal nature of his own *ingenium* that echoes the disciplinary playfulness of both Abelard and Bernard. Even a Romantic-realist (but how misleading such labels are!) novelist like Balzac testifies to the awareness of the fact that not all poetry and art is about 'absolute love':

O those who love! Impose those beautiful obligations upon yourselves; burden yourselves with rules to be stuck by as given by the Church to the Christians for daily obedience. Rigorous observance is one of the great creations of the Roman religion. They incessantly cut the grooves of duty in the soul, through the repetitions of deeds that keep alive hope and fear. Emotions run always high in the little streams that contain the water and purify it, that refresh the heart continuously and fertilise life through the abundant treasures of a hidden faith, a divine source where the unique thought of a unique love multiplies itself.²⁹

²⁹ 'O vous qui aimez! imposez-vous de ces belles obligations, chargez-vous de règles à accomplir comme l'Eglise en a donné pour chaque jour aux chrétiens. C'est de grandes idées que les observances rigoureuses créées par la Religion romaine, elles tracent toujours plus avant dans l'âme les sillons du devoir par la répétition des actes qui conservent l'espérance et la crainte. Les sentiments courent toujours vifs dans ces ruisseaux creusés qui retiennent les eaux, les purifient, rafraîchissent incessamment le coeur, et fertilisent la vie par les abondants trésors d'une foi cachée, source divine où se multiplie l'unique pensée d'un unique amour.' BALZAC, *Les lys dans la vallée*, 224.

PETRARCHAN CARTOGRAPHIC WRITING

Theodore J. Cachey, Jr.

Introduction: Petrarch's poetic representation of space

Widely recognized as the first modern poet and traditionally considered the father of Humanism, Francis Petrarch (1304–1376) is not normally thought of in relation to the history of travel. Yet Petrarch was among the most inveterate travelers of his age; and he occupied, in terms of intellectual history, a position at the vanguard of geographical and cartographical knowledge of his time. The poet's *oeuvre* cumulatively constitutes a 'representation of space,' in Lefebvrian terms,¹ that can be considered canonical for the crucial period in spatial history that witnessed the dawning of a new Atlantic age of discovery, exploration, conquest and colonization. Petrarch, for example, offers virtually first-hand testimony of the mid-fourteenth century re-discovery and colonization of the Canary-Fortunate islands in a passage of the *De vita solitaria* (as does Boccaccio in his *De canaria*).²

But Petrarch was not a passive observer content simply to register the geographical birth of the modern world. He was a poet and his contribution to the spatial history of the West was 'poetic' in the broadest, Vichian sense of the term.³ For the poets in traditional society mediated and shaped by means of the historicity of their bodies and the body of their works the apprehension and organization

¹ See LEFEBVRE, *The Production of Space*, 35–40. For Lefebvre three concepts are fundamental: spatial practice, which slowly and surely produces the society as space ('secretes' it is the term Lefebvre uses), representations of space, and representational spaces. Lefebvre distinguishes 'representations of space' from 'representational spaces.' Representations of space are conceptualized spaces, of those who identify what is lived and perceived with what is conceived. Such conceptions tend 'towards a system of verbal (and therefore intellectually worked out) signs' (39). Representational space is defined as 'space as directly *lived* through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of inhabitants and users but also of some artists and perhaps of those, such as a few writers and philosophers, who *describe* and aspire to do no more than describe' (39).

² *De vita solitaria* 2,12. See CACHEY, 'Petrarch, Boccaccio and the New World Encounter', and *Le isole fortunate*, 83–121.

³ See MAZZOTTA, *The New Map of the World: the Poetic Philosophy of Giambattista Vico*.

of space as well as social practices. From the perspective of a history of space for example, Petrarch's philological and poetic appropriation of an Augustan spatial paradigm, can be understood to mark the transition between Roman political geography and representations of space as studied by scholars like Eleanor Leach, Claude Nicolet, and James Romm to early modern national-colonial forms of 'cartographic writing' recently discussed by Tom Conley for early modern France. I propose to discuss one example of this literary appropriation and mediation in this essay: Petrarch's investigations of Thule, or, as Vergil had it, of *ultima Thule*.

But first, some brief background on the nature of my own investigation is in order. I have recently undertaken a reconsideration of Petrarch's *Opera omnia* which focusses on the metaphor and the reality of travel. Generally speaking, I take their intersection to be central to an understanding of Petrarch's life and works. A measure of Petrarch's broader significance, and his impact on the history of space emerges moreover from the consideration of the fault line that runs between the poet's conceptual representation of space (which he struggled to fix and to master, revising it repeatedly during the course of his seventy odd years) and the representational spaces, to use Lefebvrian terms, which he traversed (i.e. the lived space of fourteenth century Mediterranean world and especially of Italy and France in all their territorial and cultural specificities and discontinuities). Petrarch's seminal role, in this spatial dimension, on the history of modern literature and the history of modern travel is, I suspect, no less significant than his already widely documented and recognized influence in more traditional literary-historical terms.

This is not to say that the issue of Petrarch's travel has not been in clear view for some time. For example, the major American Petrarch scholar of the last century E.H. Wilkins' still fundamental biographical sketch of the poet took the title 'Peregrinus ubique' (a pilgrim everywhere), while Italy's major literary critic of the last century, Gianfranco Contini memorably called Petrarch an 'irrequieto turista' (an anxious tourist) in a famous essay.⁴ Clearly, an Augustinian notion of the pilgrimage of this life is as pervasive throughout Petrarch's writings as are the reports and recollections of the poet's own incessant

⁴ The tag 'peregrinus ubique' is from *Metrical Epistle* 3.19.16 to Barbato da Sulmona: 'incola cev nusquam, sic sum peregrinus ubique' (I am nowhere a citizen and a foreigner everywhere). CONTINI termed Petrarca 'L'irrequieto turista' in 'Preliminari sulla lingua di Petrarca', (xv).

biographical travels. Yet despite the theme's ubiquity, travel has been treated very discontinuously and inadequately in the Petrarchan literature.⁵ It has often been taken as a sentimental biographical theme of Petrarch's life and works, according to commonplaces like those of the 'wandering scholar,' 'the antiquarian tourist' or 'the unrequited lover running about the woods and vales.' Only rarely, and in isolated cases, as when discussing the ascent of Mt. Ventoux (*Fam.* 4.1), has travel been utilized as an analytical framework.

An holistic approach to Petrarchan travel in the light of recent anthropological studies of travel and travelers on the other hand reveals the highly ideological and rhetorical nature of Petrarch's self-conscious mastery of geographical distance and space in his life and works. That geographical knowledge and a reputation as a traveler should play vital roles in Petrarch's construction of a culturally authoritative position in his society should come as no surprise. According to the anthropologist M.W. Helms in fact, those few members of traditional societies who were able to become familiar with geographically distant phenomena and with geographical knowledge in general were often accorded an aura of prestige and 'awe' which approached 'the same order if not always the same magnitude as that accorded political-religious specialists or elites in general.'⁶ A large measure of Petrarch's cultural authority derived from his prestige as a heroic traveler and as the possessor of distant knowledge in precisely these anthropological terms.

Petrarch, of course, self-consciously cultivated his reputation as an heroic wayfarer by repeatedly comparing himself to famous explorers and military travelers of the past throughout his writings, including programmatic texts like *Familiare*s 1.1., where he likens his travels to those of Ulysses: 'Compare my wanderings to those of Ulysses. If the reputation of our name and of our achievements were the same, he indeed travelled neither more nor farther than I. . . .' Petrarch typically describes his desire for travel as the expression of a noble aspect of his character, even when, as in *Familiare*s 15.4 'to Andrea Dandolo, Doge of Venice, a justification for his frequent moves,'⁷ or

⁵ A distinguished exception to the general neglect of the theme by contemporary criticism is GREENE, 'Petrarch *Viator*.'

⁶ HELMS, *Ulysses' Sail*, 5.

⁷ 'I do not know whence its origin, but I do know that innate desire, especially in superior minds, to see new places and to change domiciles, something which I do not deny should be tempered and regulated by reason.' PETRARCH, *Letters on Familiar Matters*, II, 260.

in the 'Letter to Posterity' (*Seniles* 18.1).⁸ his restless mobility serves as a rhetorical cover for more strategic calculations of political advantage and expediency. In fact, in terms of the metaphorical and material negotiation of contemporary political space, Petrarch reveals himself to be a master of what the anthropologists call establishing spatial zones, that is, recognizing and exploiting territorial dichotomies,⁹ as for example, in his famous dilemma about whether to accept the laurel crown in Paris or in Rome (cf. *Fam.* 4.4), or in the fundamental spatial differentiation he repeatedly reconstituted along the length of his career between town and country retreat (Avignon/Vaucluse; Parma/Selvapiana; Padova/Arqua). Especially important was the border between France and Italy around which Petrarch's career turned as if on a hinge, even after he permanently took up residence in Italy.

Petrarch's socio-cultural authority derived from his reputation as someone highly informed about matters not generally known, and that knowledge included esoteric and recondite geographical information deriving from both his first-hand reconnaissance of places and from his investigations into the poetic and historical literature of the past. Petrarch's unsurpassed geographical control of the Mediterranean world was largely achieved by means of ground-breaking philological studies and this particular genre of long-distance knowledge represented a primary feature of his reputation as a 'long-distance specialist.' Petrarch, for example, is responsible for putting back into circulation in learned circles minor Roman geographers including Pomponius Mela and Vibius Sequester; yet, this was not simply a philological operation and gathering of information in support of Petrarch's reading of literary texts as modern philologists have typically supposed. These minor geographers provided the materials for Petrarch's construction of what one might term the 'imperial cosmic menagerie' of *RVF* 135 'Qual più diversa et nova' (The strangest rarest thing).¹⁰ There, a diversity of marvels, including fabulous fountains Petrarch had recently 'discovered' in Mela are gathered together from all four corners of the world within the unifying perspective of

⁸ 'At that time a youthful craving drove me to travel through France and Germany; and although I invented other reasons to have my elders approve my journey, the real reason was my ardor and curiosity to see many things.' PETRARCH, *Letters of Old Age*, vol. 2, 675.

⁹ HELMS, *Ulysses' sail*, 22-23.

¹⁰ See MONTI, 'Mirabilia e geografia nel Canzoniere.'

the poet's gaze.¹¹ Petrarch once expressed his disappointment to Boccaccio (*Seniles* 5.1) upon receiving a portion of Leonitus Pilatus's translation of Homer: 'For I had no wish to know what went on in the Greeks' hell; it is enough to know what goes on in the Latin hell.' Instead, what Petrarch had been especially anxious to know, he continues, was how Homer 'described the remote places of Italy, such as Aeolia, Lake Avernus, or the Mount of Circe . . .'.

Petrarch's self-fashioning as a master of distant knowledge

The reality and metaphor of travel were evidently very much on Petrarch's mind at the time of the original conception and early assembly of the *Familiars*, about mid-career, between 1349–51. The dedicatory letter of the *Familiars*, (authored at mid-century, already mentioned in connection with Ulysses) is carefully constructed around tropes of travel: it presents Petrarch's epistolary project as a kind of travel writing that will recover, after the apocalypse of the Black Death, that which the rich trading voyages of the 'Indian or Caspian or Carpathian Sea' could never recompense. No less suggestively and programatically, many of the largely 'fictional' and retrodated letters from the early books of the epistolary are dedicated to an idealized reconstruction of the peregrinations of the poet's youth.

A broad constellation of 'travel' texts from the early books of the epistolary collection that were all authored at this turning point in the poet's career, on the eve of his definitive return to Italy, invites the kind of reconsideration of Petrarch's travel I have proposed.¹² It is of course no accident that Petrarch's self-fashioning as a master of distant knowledge and geographical space appears to intensify in the period leading up to his definitive relocation to Italy, between 1347–

¹¹ The 'cosmic menagerie' gathers together from all the parts of the world *mirabilia* expressing the diversity of God's creation, and brings together that diversity within the unifying perspective of the emperor's gaze. The key is to constitute a harmonious whole from the diversity of the world. For the concept, see TUAN. *Cosmos & hearth: a cosmopolite's viewpoint* and HELMS who discusses the same notion in a section entitled 'The Emperor's Zoo', in *Ulysses' Sail*, 163–171.

¹² The travel letters of the early books of the *Familiars* include those describing his travels through France and Germany, *Fam.* 1.4; 1.5; 1.6; those describing his first journey to Rome, *Fam.* 2.12; 2.13; 2.14; the letter on the island of Thule, 3.1; the ascent of Mt. Ventoux, *Fam.* 4.1; and letters on his second trip to Naples including *Fam.* 5.3; 5.4; 5.5.; 5.6; as well as the famous *Fam.* 6.2: 'concerning the remarkable places in the city of Rome.'

1353 (focussed in part by his acquisition of a copy of Pliny's *Natural History* in 1350). I would submit that the travel letters from the first books of the *Familiare*s, which have often been considered marginal are instead central to an understanding of Petrarch's project in these years, and were originally intended to promote the reputation of Petrarch as traveler and possessor of long-distance knowledge, even to the very edges of the earth, as in the letter I would like to turn to now, *Familiare*s 3.1 'Ad Thomam Messanesem, de Thile insula famosissima sed incerta, opiniones diversorum' [To Tommaso da Messina, the opinions of various people concerning the very famous but doubtful island of Thule].

The letter is particularly revealing for the way in which Petrarch utilizes the thematics of travel in order to construct an authoritative self-portrait for both contemporaries and posterity. Petrarch's travels and in particular those of the 1330s, as he described them in the *Secretum* 'to the north as far as the confines of Ocean,' reveal paradoxically the strongly centripetal character of Petrarchan travel in spite of its apparently centrifugal trajectory and putative wide range.¹³ In fact, Petrarch's travels are hyperbolic and stage a heroic going out to the edges of the earth which serves primarily the purpose of preparing an even more heroic return to the center of the world located in the Petrarchan self.¹⁴ Petrarch's tropings of travel cumulatively aim to achieve a kind of geographical and topographical reorientation of the world around the Petrarchan self taken as the center point of reference for an alternative literary space or

¹³ These journeys were repeatedly memorialized by Petrarch himself: he attributes them to his desire for knowledge [in the *Posteritati*, 'vera tamen causa [of his travels] erat multa videndi ardor ac studium.' (the real reason was my ardor and curiosity to see many things)]; or he blames them on his destiny [in *RVF*, 331, 2, 'non mio voler, ma mia stella seguendo' (following not my will but my star)]; or he describes these same travels as being motivated by his desire to free himself of the thought of love for Laura [in *RVF*, 360, 46–60, *Epyst.* 1.6, 64–99 and *Secr.* 3, p. 164: 'et licet varias simula verim causas, unus tamen hic semper peregrinationum rusticationumque mearum omnium finis erat libertas' (and although I simulated different reasons, the only end of all my travels and of my retreats to the country was always and solely liberty)].

¹⁴ The eighteenth century literary historian TIRABOSCHI was perhaps the first to note a halo of indistinctness around this aspect of Petrarch's self-fashioning as heroic wayfarer when he observed in the chapter dedicated to travel writers of the Trecento from his *Storia della letteratura italiana* that Petrarch 'accenna ancora, ma oscuramente di aver costeggiati i liti di Spagna, di aver navigato l'Oceano e ancor, come sembra, di esser giunto in Inghilterra ma di ciò non ciò ha lasciata più esatta contezza' (131).

territory. Petrarch's appropriation of richly connotated elements of Augustan literary space represents an important strategy. The poet places his signature on various topoi of Roman imperial political geography, and prefigures, also in the hyperbole of the rhetorical gesture, the way in which early modern humanist self-fashioners will attempt to inscribe themselves upon the new map of the world during the Renaissance, to support the illusion that they were the makers of their own worlds, or to simply assert their presence there.

In the letter on Thule, Petrarch represents himself writing from 'the furthest of lands' (*Fam.* III, 1): 'ex ipsis britannici oceani litoribus . . . scribo' [I am writing to you from the very shores of the British ocean], probably from somewhere near Brugge on the coasts of Belgium. From there he might easily have traveled by water to Ghent which he subsequently visited according to *Familiare* 1.4. Petrarch's ordering of the chronology of the letters of the *Familiare*s which recount his early travels needs to be considered carefully in another context, also in relation to the contemporary 'making' of the *Canzoniere* and its geographical and topographical coordinates. For now we simply note that the letter on Thule to Tommaso da Messina is clearly out of sequence and appears positioned at the beginning of Book 3 in order to give Petrarch's writing from the 'edges of the earth' a particular prominence according to a textual topography which reorders Petrarch's bio-geographical extensions in space. Thus, the letter on Thule, just one in the series of letters concerned with Petrarch's travels in the early books of the *Familiare*s, corresponds structurally and to some extent thematically to the famous 'Ascent of Mt. Ventoux': both are prominently placed out of bio-chronological sequence at the beginning of Books 3 and 4 respectively. In fact, Book 1 includes letters about the journey of 1333 to France and Germany and Book 2 contains letters concerning the first journey to Rome in 1337. The letter on Thule dated 1333 (according to the fiction) and 'The Ascent of Mt. Ventoux' (dated 1336) disrupt the biographical chronological sequencing of the letters, which is taken up again in Book 5 in four letters treating the journeys of 1341 and 1343 to Naples. I would like to return to consider the topographical and thematic relationship between *Fam.* 3.1 and *Fam.* 4.1 in the last part of this essay.

Retroactive fictionalization

Like many letters from the early part of the *Familiars*, the letter on Thule was written much later than its fictional dating of 1333; it is addressed to a friend of the poet's student years in Bologna, Tommaso da Messina, who was already dead by the time Petrarch conceived the idea of constructing an autobiographical epistolary.¹⁵ The letter on Thule of the *Familiars* is no more addressed to a living addressee than were the letters of the last book of the collection composed at the same time addressed to Virgil and Homer et al.¹⁶ Petrarch's figuring of himself 'ex ipsis britannici oceani litoribus insule, propinquior—ut fama est—ipsi quam vestigamus' [from the very shores of the British ocean thus close as rumor would have it to the very island we are investigating] represents an heroic retroactive fictionalization of the scene of writing, no less fictional than his claim toward the end of the letter that 'Hec igitur ex tempore et ex memoria tibi scibo . . .' [I am writing this to you extemporaneously and by memory] at exactly the point where he begins to cite Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* on Thule (carefully collating this source with Pomponius Mela). As mentioned earlier, Pliny had only just come into his library around 1350, that is, shortly before the time he sat at his desk to write the letter on Thule almost twenty years after his travels to the north.

The constructed and staged nature of the letter should not distract us from attending to the wider cultural significance that the classical topos of the island Thule, located somewhere between geography and fiction, had for Petrarch, and that which it will have subsequently during the Renaissance period and especially during the period of the discoveries and explorations. Indeed, Thule's liminal status, located at the very ends of the earth and on the border between geographical truth and literary fiction suits perfectly, as we will see, the purposes of Petrarch's literary project. From its first appearance in geographical writings around 300 B.C. Thule presents itself as a place which can be perceived but not approached; it is doubtful that its discoverer Pythais of Massilia, mentioned in passing by Petrarch in his letter, had ever been there. The aura of uncertainty surrounding Thule, which led to its assuming symbolic rather than geographic resonance,

¹⁵ For Petrarch and Tommaso da Messina, see LO PARCO, *Francesco Petrarca e Tommaso Caloro alla Università di Bologna*.

¹⁶ On the chronology and composition of the *Familiars* see BILLANOVICH, *Petrarca letterato. I. Lo Scrittoio del Petrarca*, 1–55 and especially 50, n. 1.

is expressed by the epithet attached to it by Virgil and following him, by Seneca, *ultima* or farthest Thule, an expression punctually cited by Petrarch here: 'Ultimam quippe terrarum esse, non ambigitur: hoc Virgilius canit, hoc Seneca, hoc secutus utrunque Boetius. . . .' [There is no doubt that Thule was indeed the most remote of lands. Virgil sings of this, Seneca does also, and so does Boethius following both of them . . .].

Virgil's use of the phrase *ultima Thule* in the proem to the *Georgics* was, according to James Romm, 'almost certainly its first occurrence,' and its emergence within the context of a panegyric to Augustus as savior of Rome connects it to the new world themes of the *Aeneid*. Vergilian Thule signaled the hope that expansion west would bring about a new order of things and as Romm has observed this 'powerful vision . . . Was to have an impact, far beyond what Vergil himself could foresee.'¹⁷ Meanwhile other Roman authors saw the same horizon in less optimistic terms: Horace in his 16th *epode* saw it as offering the possibility of a final and irrevocable flight from Rome; while voyages of exploration and discovery themselves were sometimes seen as the violation of 'the natural order which had separated the regions of the globe with seas.'¹⁸ The specifically Roman provenance of this theme has been demonstrated by G. Biondi in an important essay on the argonautic myth in the *Medea* of Seneca, precisely the other text Petrarch alludes to as a primary classical source at the beginning of his letter.¹⁹ Indeed, no other author expresses more powerfully this ambivalence toward travel than Seneca for whom the increase in travel and exploration under the Romans is described as a perversion of world geography ' . . . confusing the order of nature and interchanging peoples on opposite sides of the globe.'²⁰ This perspective informs the apocalyptic passage of the the famous third chorus of Seneca's *Medea*:

Venient annis saecula seri,
quibus oceanus vincula rerum
laxet, et ingens pateat tellus,
Tethysque novos detegat orbes
nec sit terris ultima Thule.

(Seneca, *Medea* 375–9)

¹⁷ ROMM, *Edges of the Earth*, 161.

¹⁸ ROMM, *Edges of the Earth*, 164.

¹⁹ See BIONDI, 'Il mito argonautico nella *Medea*.'

²⁰ ROMM, *Edges of the Earth*, 170.

[An age shall, come, in later years, when Ocean shall loose creation's bonds, when the great planet shall stand revealed and Thetis shall disclose new worlds, nor shall Thule be last (*ultima*) among lands.]

According to Romm, Seneca here conflates 'nautical exploration with the Stoic vision of the cyclic destruction of the cosmos' and depicts 'the crossing of Ocean as a final cataclysmic step in human moral decline.' Seneca includes the Vergilian phrase *ultima Thule* in the final line of the chorus to bring home, as Romm has it, 'the true depth of his brooding pessimism.'²¹

Now of the three authorities on Thule that Petrarch cites from the beginning as foundational, Virgil, Seneca and Boethius, it was Boethius who had anticipated Petrarch and provided him with a Christian perspective on the island by placing virtue above the epic territorial ambition connotated by the Thule of the imperial Vergilian tradition:

Qui se volet esse potentem,
 Animos domet ille feroces
 Nec victa libidine colla
 Foedis submittat habenis.
 Etenim licet Indica longe
 Tellus tua iura tremescat,
 Et serviat ultima Thyle
 Tamen atras pellere curas
 Miserasque fugare querelas
 Non posse, potentia non est.
 (Bk III, V)

[The man who wants to be powerful/Must tame his high spirits,/Must not submit his neck, conquered by lust,/To its stinking halter; For indeed though far-off Indian soil/Tremble under your sway,/And furthest Thule serve you,/Yet not to be able to dispel black care/Or put complaining misery to flight/This is no power at all.]

In fact, Petrarch goes even further by expressing his own ambivalence about aggressively seeking after Thule in the first place, in a manner that appears to undermine and cut off the investigation into Thule which he has undertaken: 'Lateat ad aquilonem Thile, lateat ad austrum Nili caput: modo non lateat in medio consistens virtus. . . . Ne ergo nimis magnam operam impedamus in inquisitione loci, quem forsán inventum cupide linqueremus . . .' [But let Thule lie hidden to the North, let the source of the Nile lie hidden to the South, pro-

²¹ ROMM, *Edges of the Earth*, 171.

vided that virtue, which is centrally placed, does not lie hidden. . . . Therefore let us not expend too great a labor in the search for a place which if we found it, we would perhaps gladly leave.] What fundamentally characterizes Petrarch's intervention however is not this move which comes at the end of the letter, after several passages of vain investigation of sources; indeed, it has something of the ring of a foregone conclusion. Instead, what distinguishes Petrarch's original contribution to the tradition on Thule is instead the way in which the search for Thule serves as a pretext for the creation of a literary self-portrait for the benefit of his contemporaries and posterity.

I refer for example to the poet's report of 'an interesting conversation' about Thule 'with Richard, former Chancellor of the English King, a man with a sharp mind and considerable knowledge of letters.' The passage offers a charming narrative dedicated to an account of his relations with the British courtier Richard de Bury (d. 1345),²² whose *Philobiblon* would subsequently establish his reputation as medieval Europe's greatest book collector but who while living disappointed Petrarch's hopes of having news of Thule from a 'native informant.' The characterization of Richard that emerges, of one who could not answer Petrarch's questions about Thule until 'he had returned to his native land and to his books of which he possessed an extraordinary number', is anything but flattering. In fact, Richard does not answer Petrarch's letters seeking further illumination about the matter: 'Though he left with a promise on his lips either because he found nothing or because of the serious duties of his pontifical office which he had newly assumed, he satisfied my expectation with nothing but obstinate silence notwithstanding the many reminders I sent him.' Not answering Petrarch's letters was unfortunate, at least for Richard de Bury's reputation before posterity. The presentation of the author of the *Philobiblon* who can not respond to Petrarch without going home to consult his books in his famous library and then does not even answer his letters is not so subtly juxtaposed to the self-portrait of the poet who collates Pliny and Pomponius Mela

²² See SEGRE, 'Petarca e Riccardo de Bury.' The relationship between Richard de Bury and Petrarch has been recently discussed by QUILLEN in *Rereading the Renaissance: Petrarch, Augustine, and the Language of Humanism*, 64–68. Quillen's discussion is excellent as far as it goes but appears to underestimate Petrarch's self-awareness in setting up Richard de Bury as a foil, by means of the opposition that is established in *Fam.* 3.1 between Petrarch and Richard of Bury as two different and potentially competing models of courtly humanistic culture. On Richard de Bury, see the recent essay by CAMILLE, 'The Book as Flesh and Fetish in Richard de Bury's *Philobiblon*.'

ex tempore et ex memoria while writing home from a beach thousands of miles from home (and to a dead friend for that matter).

There follows a description of Petrarch's reading and study habits and library acquisition policies in this case, rather exceptionally of a medieval source 'in a not unrefined style. . . . A little book on the wonders of Ireland,' the *De Mirabilibus Hiberniae* of Giraldus Cambrensis (also known as Geraldus De Barri). This work enters Petrarch's library because the poet was attracted to 'a similar bent of mind' revealed in the common interest in the problem of the location of Thule. The extent to which the work mirrors Petrarch justifies its inclusion. But Giraldus is barely admitted to the library of Petrarch before he is dismissed unceremoniously for his unsystematic and incoherent collation of the sources he brings to bear on the question of Thule: 'You should consider the witnesses that he uses to see the extent to which they support him and you will understand how much faith must be placed in his words.' This turn against Giraldus' philology may mask another preoccupation of Petrarch's having to do with the fact that Giraldus was a first-hand traveler in those parts and actually had reported from a location much closer to the supposed location of Thule. As in the comparison with Richard de Bury, Petrarch appears to vie with contemporaries and precursors on the question and defines himself in contrast to them. In fact, the point of the introduction of this medieval researcher into the question of Thule is to set up a contrast between him and Petrarch's more rigorous and consequential collation of Pliny and Pomponius Mela which comes after. The letter can be said to culminate in the self-presentation of Petrarch as humanist geographical authority with a prodigious memory which follows immediately: 'I myself am very far from all my books . . .' but, he writes, 'there are many things that I remember no differently than if I had books readily available since repeated reflection on such things impresses them upon me deeply and strongly.' But of course, Petrarch's impressive recital and collation of Pliny and Pomponius Mela 'ex tempore et ex memoria' is doubtlessly staged.²³

²³ Petrarch makes a great show of employing his prodigious memory here. CARRUTHERS, *The Book of Memory: a Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, reminds us that the poet 'had a significant reputation as an authority on memory training (7). The extent to which Petrarch's reputation in the field of the 'arts of memory' masked his transitional role between medieval memorial culture and modern documentary culture is worth further exploration.

In this movement between a framing or authorizing discourse about the self seeking virtue and the construction of a literary self portrait, the letter on Thule provides a tidy illustration of Petrarch's transformation of the notion of the self and of seeking after it into a primarily literary enterprise. Brian Stock has described the paradigm shift that takes place at the end of the Middle Ages, whereby the use of reading and writing in defining the self comes to occupy as important a place as the venerable concern with the self as an aspect of soul or mind.²⁴ The implications of this paradigm shift for the history of space however have yet to be developed. From this perspective, it is interesting that the beginning of modern literature and of modern travel appear to coincide in Petrarch.

Petrarch could not have been aware of all of the potential or possible resonances of his intervention in the question surrounding the identification of Thule. In the wake of Columbus' discoveries, Charles V of Spain will adopt the Vergilian tag 'tibi serviat Ultima Thule' [Let farthest Thule obey you] as one of the rallying cries for his fleets bound to the New World. Columbus in his *Book of Prophecies* interpreted the third chorus of the Medea as referring to his own discoveries, abbetted in this misreading by a textual corruption which had replaced the pilot of the Argo Tifi for the goddess of Ocean Thetis. And of course these verses later became one of the flashpoints for discussion and debate about the ancients' knowledge of the newly discovered continent and its significance.²⁵ Nevertheless, Petrarch's intervention needs to be considered within the context of this wider history, for the light it can shed on Petrarch's own cultural position and that of emergent humanism within a broader anthropological history of travel and of space. In fact, Petrarch's letter on Thule represents a key moment in this history to the extent that it expresses an ostensible resistance to material travel which coincides precisely with the moment in which, from a historical point of view, the age of Atlantic New World exploration, discovery and eventual conquest was getting underway with the discovery and conquest of the Canary Islands during the 1330s, 1340s and 1350s, a history that culminates during the High Renaissance with the European discovery and conquest of the New World.

²⁴ See STOCK, 'Reading, Writing, and the Self: Petrarch and His Forerunners.'

²⁵ See ROMM, 'New World and *novos orbis*: Seneca in the Renaissance Debate over Ancient Knowledge of the Americas.'

Let me illustrate more concretely what I mean and draw that connection between the letter on Thule and the 'Ascent of Mt. Ventoux' mentioned at the outset. I find it particularly telling that to justify his focus on Thule on the northwest edges of the earth that Petrarch claims in *Fam.* 3.1 that '... we get information ... about the Fortunate Islands to the south of the same ocean either through actual visitation or through constant testimony of travelers, almost as much as we do of Italy itself or of France ...'. This, when we know that according to the fictionalized dating of the letter which is purported to have been written in 1333, the Canaries had barely been discovered. In fact, no documents have survived attesting to knowledge of the Canaries from before 1330: the Dulcert portolan represents them for the first time in 1339 and the discovery is today usually attributed to the Genoese Lanzarotto Malocello on behalf of the Portuguese and dated around 1336. Even around 1350–1351, when the letter was actually written, to say that the Canaries were as familiar as Italy and France was hyperbolic to say the least and, I would argue, expression of a broader rhetorical strategy vis-à-vis breakthroughs in the realm of material travel which were taking place during the period.²⁶ It is from this point of view that the letter on Thule can be read in relation to the ascent of Mt. Ventoux which also presents Petrarch pushing the envelope, so to speak, of modern travel, as geographical explorer at the edges of the earth in the case of Thule and as the first man to climb a mountain just because it was there to be climbed, or first 'Alpinist' as Carducci among others had it at the turn of the last century. But besides missing the Augustinian subtext of the letter these readers of the Ascent had to overlook the fact that, of course, Petrarch was not really the first but only the second 'Alpinist.' Philippe Joutard notes in his *L'invention du Mont Blanc* that Petrarch's ascent was preceded by about fifty years by an expedition of Peter III of Aragon who led an expedition that reached the summit of Canigou (2784 m).²⁷ This peak rises at the

²⁶ Like Dante before him, Petrarch also perceived the birth of modern geographical discovery and exploration beyond the Pillars of Hercules as problematic and potentially threatening. While Dante fashions an elaborate strategy of response by which the condemnation of Ulysses served as a means of authorizing the Florentine exile's own poetic-prophetic *navigatio*, Petrarch's strategy is to co-opt the impulse and energy of modern travel and to redirect it toward the self, but not the self in its Augustinian or Dantean guise but rather in its modern Petrarchan expression as an artifact of writerly self-fashioning.

²⁷ See JOUTARD, *L'invention du Mont Blanc*, 24–35.

eastern extreme of the Pyrenees where it dominates the plane of Roussillon, and is a famous landmark and center of local legends. It was also only sixty miles as the crow flies from Lombez, Cardinal Giovanni's seat in the Pyrenees where Petrarch accompanied his patron in the 1330s on the first travels of his youth.

We have noted Petrarch's interest in the problem of Thule, which coincides with the onset of the period of Atlantic discoveries and explorations; it appears the poet's interest in mountain climbing also coincides with a historically landmark expedition which had a wide resonance (Salimbene reports it) and which he no doubt would have learned about first-hand during his travels in the Pyrenees during the 1330s, exactly the period which is fictionally being reconstructed in the autobiographical travel letters of the first part of the *Familiars*. This context for the Ascent, in relation to a systematic appropriation of tropes of travel I think would help to explain something that troubled Thomas Greene and that, in effect, does seem quite inexplicable. I refer to Petrarch's account in the letter on the 'Ascent of Mt. Ventoux' that he was prompted to make the climb by reading Livy's relation of the ascent of Mount Haemus by Philip of Macedon with his troops (Livy, xl. 21. 2-22 7). Greene was unable to explain Petrarch's 'suppression of the ridicule attached to this fumbled expedition in Livy's original.'²⁸ I believe the problem might be resolved by recognizing the purely pretextual nature of the classical source which serves to mask the ascent of Canigou as the genuine subtext for Petrarch's literary climbing expedition and for the exercise in self-fashioning in which Petrarch is engaged.

Petrarch co-opts some of the most significant developments in contemporary travel in order to empty them of their material valence and uses them ably in the construction of a monument to himself and to his own authority as poet and intellectual figure. The differences between the letter on Thule and the Ascent explain why the Ascent has become a classic and the letter on Thule has been relatively neglected. The tension between spiritual and geographical exploration

²⁸ See GREENE, 'Petrarch *Viator*,' p. 45. See also GREENE, 'Petrarch: The Ontology of the Self': 'Petrarch's impulse to imitate Philip would be hard to explain if we lacked evidence that Petrarch the man tried repeatedly to imitate the conduct as well as the style of the ancients, in large things and small. It has been argued that Petrarch rejected his apparently inoffensive illegitimate son by way of imitating Cicero's paternal troubles. Thus he seems to have seized upon a brief and unlikely incident in Livy as an authenticating pretext for his own admirable and spontaneous impulse' (105).

in 'the Ascent,' between internal and external travel, is left unresolved, and this has made the letter the focus of so much interest and debate. The quest for knowledge at the edges of the earth in the letter on Thule is by contrast perhaps too heavy-handedly undermined and neatly contained. Both letters are nevertheless primarily concerned with presenting the literary self-portrait that Petrarch is fashioning for contemporaries and for posterity. The letter on Thule may be aesthetically less successful than 'The Ascent' but it is more revealing from an ideological perspective. In the letter on Thule, at the same time that Petrarch appears to surrender to the impossibility of knowing the truth about the farthest lands beyond the Ocean and relinquishes that quest, he effectively redirects our attention to the presentation of his own scholarly explorations which are tantamount to a literary exercise in autobiographical writing. It is through the evocation of the Roman tradition's most powerful island myth and it is through the ostensible neutralization of that myth's original spatial ambition and utopianism 'at the edges of the earth' that Petrarch expresses the utopian self-centered ambition of his own literary enterprise.

Petrarch's inward turn

The letter on Thule and the 'Ascent of Mt. Ventoux' serve then as boundary markers not only in the sense that they delimit segments of textual topography, that is, the beginnings of Book 3 and 4 respectively of the *Familiars*. They also stand as signposts defining paradigmatically the (self-imposed) limits of Petrarchan travel. From the shores of the Ocean Petrarch chooses, un-ulysseslike, not to embark upon the waters and from atop Mt. Ventoux he raises not his eyes above to consider the heavens but surveys beneath him only as far as his eyes can see. Petrarch will maintain his preference for the synoptic view from above as his characteristic way of taking in 'the whole': verticality from above looking down—never up. His horizontal vision is likewise limited to his own powers of sight. In this way, Petrarch's observation in 4.1 that he can only imagine the Pyrenees beyond the limits of his vision 'not because anything intervenes as far as I know, but because the human sight is too weak' is analogous to his saying he can not see Thule. Both letters figure Petrarch's inward turn and primary concern with issues of moral philosophy

as opposed to matters of natural science and geography, and affirm the value of self-knowledge from the vantage point of the farthest geographical and topographical extension of that self: 'If it is denied me to search out these hiding places of nature and to know their secrets, I shall be satisfied with knowing myself.' (3.1) Both letters express Petrarchan ambivalence. That is, they confess or display desire for an external kind of knowledge which is subsequently disavowed in favor of an interior quest for 'true knowledge'; and we have seen how this palinodic structure serves the purposes of a broader and more over-arching Petrarchan project of self-fashioning. But in literary historical terms it is also worth noting how this move distracts attention from the poet's eschewal of more speculative and metaphysical forms of knowledge as well, which were associated with the islands of the West and sacred mountain throughout the tradition. Precisely these travel motifs, if you will, were privileged by the tradition when speaking of the search for spiritual, salvific and eschatological forms of knowledge. The opening letters of Book 3 and Book 4 respectively figure Petrarch turning his back upon the search for an island utopia beyond or the mountain top of divine inspiration and knowledge.

The resultant reduction of Petrarch's spatial and topographical extension with respect to his predecessor Dante is especially striking. The shadow of Dante's poetical-ideological cosmography is barely beneath the surface of a distinctive Petrarchan topography which radically reduces the poet's field of 'vision.' It is as if the literary and poetical imagination has lost nearly all its altitude and been reduced to the height of Mt. Ventoux, 'scarcely a cubit high' in comparison with the soaring verticality, so to speak, of the *Commedia*; the horizontal axis is similarly severely restricted by the bounds of Ocean. This shift from Dante's ideological-metaphysical cartographic in the mode of the *mappa mundi* to Petrarch's more empirical and portolan style perspective is signalled moreover by the splitting of the island and mountain motifs which had been fused in the *Commedia*'s island of Mt. Purgatory or more precisely the island-mountain of the Earthly Paradise. The conflation of the two motifs in Dante underscores the function of the island of the Earthly paradise as both a destination and a point of departure within the narrative of salvation history. This is what neither Thule nor Mt. Ventoux could ever be for Petrarch. By separating the two motifs Petrarch expresses skepticism about Dante's eschatological vision and trajectory of transcendence

and consequently at some deeper level a resistance to and anxiety about arrivals and his fear of coming to the end of the journey. The sacred island-mountain that had been a destination/point of departure in Dante is replaced by an island that cannot be reached and a mountain that one can ascend and descend as one pleases.

Indeed, if Petrarch has distinguished the two themes topographically in the *Familiars*, the complementarity of their positioning and the shadow of Dante invites us to consider them nonetheless as a single entity. The 'ideal' island always possesses at its center a mountain top the traveler can scale and from which he can take in the extent of the island and the waters on all sides like a shipwrecked character from a Jules Verne novel; the mountain top easily serves as an appropriate counterfigure for the unicity, the isolation of the island. But while either the island or the mountain top might appropriately have figured the unity and separateness of the Petrarchan self, the poet very strongly favors the latter and in this way signifies what might be termed the continental orientation of his insular identity. In terms of spatial imagination Petrarch's lack of interest in travel to an island (in fact, he shows no interest in islands in his works, including the *Itinerarium*) is comprehensible. In the first place, one does not just come upon an island by chance, one goes there. Compare this with the 'Ascent of Mt. Ventoux' where even climbing the mountain is described as a chance undertaking occasioned by the reading of a passage of Livy and the fact that the mountain was ready at hand. Petrarch's penchant for wandering and his aversion to purposeful and pre-programmed travel is legendary and hinted at even in his approach to Thule which might aptly be described as a 'wandering' among sources. Petrarch finally, in fact, ends up describing Thule as 'a place which if we found we would perhaps gladly leave.' Petrarch's first thought, even before reaching the island, is that he would gladly leave it. He would no doubt have gladly left it just as he was wont to leave any and every place where he might happen along the path of this journey of our lives. But he may well have found islands more difficult with regard to access than mountains.

In fact, while Dante's island of Mt. Purgatory had located upon its summit an earthly Paradise from which Dante the pilgrim departs for the next stage of his journey, for Petrarch the island has the potential to become the claustrophobic prison of a self that depends upon constant movement for its care and feeding. Petrarch's inability to keep still, what he describes in the letter to Dandolo as 'a

rather serious disease of the mind,' is in part a result of his need to define and display the self constantly in relation to and in terms of an other. The isolation of the island, its marginality and its isolation are an anathema to Petrarch and his project. Better the mountain from which he can survey as far as he can see and ascend and descend as he desires than to reach an island at the edges of the earth only to be enclosed there by the surrounding waters.

IN SEARCH OF FAME: SELF-REPRESENTATION IN NEO-LATIN HUMANISM

Karl Enenkel

Introduction

This paper deals with the at first sight curious phenomenon that in Neo-Latin Humanism the self-representation of the intellectual gains an overwhelming importance: humanists, as it seems, were willing to invest a considerable part of their time in modelling their reputation in society and among their fellow intellectuals. In harsh invectives, they defended their position against their intellectual enemies; with every word published they strove for a well-respected position within the networks of the international *Respublica litteraria*. In doing so they developed a more profound interest in their individual personality than was usually the case in the centuries before and also among most of their contemporaries. The striving for earthly fame (*fama, gloria*), the display of a strong selfconsciousness, the pride in intellectual achievements etc., slowly emerged in the fourteenth century from the sphere of negative moral evaluation. A remarkable change took place: as its result, from the fifteenth century on, the concepts mentioned above have clearly turned into positive values, and were generally accepted by the humanists and on a large scale by other intellectuals.

Most interestingly, the humanists developed certain literary genres that were especially suitable for their self-representation. To name but a few, they (re)invented the Latin *private prose letter*, the Latin *writer's autobiography*, the *commentarii* (historiography from an individual point of view), the *dedicatory letter*, and the Latin *autobiographical elegy*. Individual fame, in general, became a major concept of humanistic thought. Given that Humanism was much concerned with reputation and fame, the promulgation of fame via biographies was, of course, also of vital importance. The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries witnessed the publication of monumental collections of biographies: true halls of fame, e.g. of Paolo Giovio, Fulvio Orsini, Théodore de Bèze, Nicolaus

Reusner, Johannes Miraeus, Johannes Meursius and many others.¹ Of almost every humanist we have one or more biographies, and several other (auto)biographical documents as well.² With a certain justification one may call the age of Humanism the age of biographism.

Our subject, humanistic self-representation in autobiographical texts in fact comprises a field much too extended for a single article: already the amount of relevant source-texts is immense. There are several hundred thousands of Latin humanist's letters, and thousands of volumes of correspondence preserved, either in manuscript or in print.³ The correspondence of many authors comprises more than a hundred letters; of some authors several thousands, as is the case with Erasmus and Lipsius.⁴ Of most of these letters we do not have modern editions nor are they listed in a census; not even of complete correspondences printed in the early modern period do we possess a census.⁵ Very much the same is true for the Latin dedicatory letters. It is clear that the letter of dedication was a standard part of each single humanistic publication; there must therefore exist a number almost as large as the number of published texts (in manuscript and in printed form as well), probably even larger, since quite often the same work was dedicated more than once. Even of the so-

¹ GIOVIO, *Elogia virorum literis illustrium*; GIOVIO, *Elogia virorum bellica virtute illustrium*; GIOVIO, *Opera* [. . .] *omnia*; GIOVIO, *Opera*; ORSINI, *Imagines et elogia virorum illustrium et eruditorum*; REUSNER, *Icones*; BÉZE, *Icones*; MEURSIUS, *Illustris Academia Lugd.-Batava, Athenae Batavae*; MIRAEUS, *Elogia illustrium Belgii*. For Giovio cf. RAVE, 'Paolo Giovio und die Bildnisvitenbücher'; for Meursius and Miraeus, see ENENKEL, 'Het Nederlandse 'nationale bewustzijn' in biografische reeksen'.

² Of Lipsius, for instance, we have an autobiography, a very detailed biography by Aubertus Miraeus, several short biographies among others by Meursius, and several thousands of private Latin letters (*ILE*). These different documents have a sometimes intriguing intertextuality; for his autobiography, cf. ENENKEL, 'Selbstbildformung in Lipsius' Autobiographie'; for Miraeus's biography ENENKEL, 'Lipsius als Modellgelehrter'.

³ The cult of Latin letter-writing is of the highest importance for the understanding of humanism. See the *Acta* of the Louvain colloquium April 2000, VAN HOUTD & TOURNOY (eds.), *Contributions to the Literary and Cultural History of Letter Writing in the Early Modern Times*; VAN HOUTD, PAPY & TOURNOY, *Self-Presentation and Social Identification*; CLOUGH, 'Letters and Letter Collections'; HESS, 'Typen des Humanistenbriefs'; HARTH, *Poggio Bracciolini und die Briefliteratur des 15. Jh.*; HENDERSON, 'On Reading the Rhetoric of the Renaissance Letter'; IJSEWIJN-SACRÉ, *Companion*, 218–28.

⁴ Cf. ERASMUS, *Opus Epistolarum*; LIPSIUS, *ILE*.

⁵ The selective bibliography in IJSEWIJN'S-SACRÉ'S *Companion*, 222–28 which comprises the recently published editions of several famous humanists gives a first impression of the enormous number of correspondences, most of them lacking a modern critical edition. IJSEWIJN'S and SACRÉ'S short list comprises some 109 correspondences.

called genre of 'autobiography' (comprising inter alia the *autobiographical elegy*, the *writer's autobiography in Latin prose* and the *commentarii*) we do not yet have a clear and satisfactory picture,⁶ although the amount of these texts is not as enormously large as that of Latin private letters and dedicatory epistles.

Given these facts, not surprisingly, it is impossible to achieve a more or less complete description of the sources in a small article. What one can reasonably do is deal with the subject phenomenologically: to start from some exemplary texts and analyse how self-representation functions; which the relevant topics are; which impact the literary antecedents had on the humanist's self-representation; what impact the humanist's social and ideological background had on this self-representation; and in which way the humanists drove their points home in their autobiographical writings. For my analysis, I have chosen the following texts, belonging to three different genres: Petrarch's prose autobiography (*Letter to Posterity*, ca. 1370);⁷ Raffaele Reggio's *dedicatory letters* to his famous widely-disseminated commentary on Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, addressed to Francesco Gonzaga, the prince of Mantua⁸ (1493—more than fifty editions appeared in the sixteenth century) and to Philippus Cyulanus, the ambassador of the Hungarian king in Venice (from 1513);⁹ and the German humanist Eobanus Hessus's autobiographical elegy (*Eobanus posteritati*, 1514).¹⁰ All four texts have in common that they are about reputation, fame, posterity, immortality of the intellectual, the role of the humanist in the contemporary social and intellectual context, and moreover that for all of them the reception of Ovid plays a main part.

⁶ The author is preparing a monograph on Neo-Latin humanist autobiographical writing. On humanistic biography and autobiography in general, cf. the seminal article IJSEWIJN, 'Humanistic Autobiography'; on the confessional type of early humanistic autobiography see Price ZIMMERMANN, 'Confession and Autobiography'. The part dealing with Renaissance autobiography in Gregor MISCH's monumental *Die Geschichte der Autobiographie* (vol. IV.2 *Von der Renaissance bis zu den autobiographischen Hauptwerken des 18. und 19. Jahrhunderts*) still leaves something to be desired; moreover, it is incomplete. GUGLIELMINETTI gives an introduction to Italian autobiography in her *Memoria e scrittura. L'autobiografia da Dante a Cellini*; for several issues cf. ENENKEL, DE JONG-CRANE & LIEBREGTS (eds.), *Modelling the Individual: Biography and Portrait in the Renaissance*.

⁷ See my critical edition with an English translation in ENENKEL, DE JONG-CRANE & LIEBREGTS (eds.), *Modelling the Individual*, 243–82.

⁸ *Metamorphoseos libri XV. In eosdem libros Raphaelis Regii luculentissime enarrationes* (Venice: Bernardinus de Bindonibus 1540), f. +iiii^r – +V^r. The letter is dated *Venetis Nonis Septembris. MCCCCXXXiii*.

⁹ *Ibidem*, f. +iir. The letter is dated *Venetis. vii. Cal. Iunias. M.D.X.III*.

¹⁰ See Harry Vredeveld's edition.

Petrarch

The *Epistola posteritati* by Francis Petrarch is a text of crucial importance for humanist self-representation.¹¹ It became, in the fifteenth and sixteenth century an authoritative model for the humanist's self-fashioning. In the sixteenth century, it was available in print in the widely-diffused Basle editions of Petrarch's *Opera omnia*.¹² Moreover, it exerted its influence via the numerous biographies of Petrarch which depended on it.¹³ I will deal here not so much with the genesis of the *Letter to Posterity*, nor with the question of its composition, nor with its interesting intertextuality with its immediate predecessor, Boccaccio's *Biography of Petrarch* (which I discussed elsewhere).¹⁴ I shall focus exclusively on the issue of the self-representation.

Petrarch's *Epistola posteritati* is all the more relevant for the question of the humanistic self-representation, since it is closely connected with the genre of the humanistic *private letter*: a genre invented by Petrarch in order to shape his reputation, as I have shown elsewhere.¹⁵ Petrarch's enormously influential innovation—almost every humanist after him composed Latin private letters—was in fact dependent on a misinterpretation of the purpose of Cicero's *Letters to Atticus* which he discovered 1345 in Verona. Petrarch supposed that Cicero wanted to have his private letters published and that he had used the private letter as a medium of literary autobiography (both hypotheses being in fact wrong).¹⁶ This misinterpretation, however, turned out to be extremely fruitful: Petrarch wrote not only hundreds of beautiful Latin letters but also collected them in a monumental intellectual autobiography: the *Familiar letters* (*Familiarum rerum libri XXIV*).¹⁷

The *Epistola posteritati* figures in the framework of the private correspondence. As a sequel to the *Familiar Letters*, Petrarch composed

¹¹ For interpretations of the *Epistola posteritati* see ENENKEL, 'Modelling the Humanist: Petrarch's *Letter to Posterity* and Boccaccio's *Biography of the Poet Laureate*'; ENENKEL, 'De gelauwerde dichter over zichzelf'; CARRARA, 'L'epistola *Posteritati* e la leggenda Petrarquesca'; KESSLER, 'Petarcas *Brief an die Nachwelt*'.

¹² PETRARCH, *Opera omnia* (1496/1554/1581).

¹³ For the text of these biographies see SOLERTI's edition in *Le vite di Dante, Petrarca e Boccaccio scritte fino al secolo decimosesto*.

¹⁴ ENENKEL, 'Modelling the Humanist: Petrarch's *Letter to Posterity* and Boccaccio's *Biography of the Poet Laureate*'.

¹⁵ ENENKEL, 'Die Grundlegung humanistischer Selbstpräsentation im Brief-Corpus: [...] Petrarca's *Familiars* [...]'

¹⁶ Cf. ENENKEL, 'Heilige Cicero, help mij!', esp. 23ff.

¹⁷ See PETRARCA, *Le familiari*; cf. the English translation by Aldo Bernardo; for an analytical list see WILKINS, *Petrarch's Correspondence*.

the *Correspondence of Old Age* (*Rerum senilium libri XVIII*). The *Epistola posteritati* was meant as the concluding letter of the *Rerum senilium libri*, in a certain manner representing Petrarch's will in terms of self-representation.

The literary form of the *Epistola posteritati*—consisting of two parts: a 'static' portrait of Petrarch's mind, character, and physical appearance (*Ep. post.* 2–11), and a chronological narrative of his life (up to the year 1351; *Ep. post.* 12–30)—goes back both to the Alexandrian writer's biography and to Ovid's elegiac autobiography *Tristia* IV,10. The literary form which Petrarch chose is in itself a telling statement of self-representation. The philologists from Alexandria had made the writer's biography an indispensable constituent of their critical editions of 'classical' authors. Roman grammarians, including Aelius Donatus took over this habit. For the Roman writer's biographies the grammarian and antiquarian scholar Suetonius was of great importance with his *Biographies of the poets* (*De poetis*): among others those of the classics Virgil, Terence and Horace.¹⁸ Donatus appended to his editions of Virgil and Terence biographies in the Alexandrian manner by using and revising Suetonius's biographies.¹⁹ Via Donatus's editions the combination of *Opera* and biography of classical authors was transmitted to the Middle Ages.

Thus, when Petrarch added to his works a writer's (auto-)biography in Suetonian/Donatan style, he proudly presented himself as a 'classical' author standing on a par with Vergil, Horace etc. This very proud self-representation corresponds, indeed, with his artistic programme: he intended to be the modern Virgil, for him the best poet of antiquity (cf. Petrarch's *Aeneis*-imitation, the epos *Africa*), and the modern Cicero, for him the best prose writer of antiquity (cf. Petrarch's imitation of Cicero's prose letters: *Familiarium rerum*).

The other ancient example essential for Petrarch's self-representation, is Ovid's elegiac autobiography *Tristia* IV,10. Petrarch took over from this text:

- the addressee of his autobiography posterity (*posteritas*—cf. the first two lines of Ovid's poem);
- the autobiographer's claim to eternal fame;

¹⁸ For Suetonius's *Lives of the poets*, see the critical edition by Rostagni; for Suetonius' *Vita Vergilii*, see the edition by Karl Bayer; cf. BAYER, *Der Suetonische Kern [...] der Vergilvita*.

¹⁹ See NAUMANN, '125 Jahre *Vita Donatiana* des Vergil'; REEVE, 'The Textual Tradition of Donatus' *Commentary on Terence*'.

- the form of the letter (Ovid's elegies were letters in verse, sent to Rome);
- the idea of the *sphragis* ('seal': usually some lines within a poem in which the author identifies himself);
- and last but not least the self-representational mode as an exile.

The fact that Petrarch located his auto-history in the tradition of Ovid's autobiography had an enormous impact on his self-representation, since the literary model legitimated him as presenting himself (however cautiously) in the Latin poet's *autobiographical discourse of fame*. It is not so important that Petrarch took over all of Ovid's autobiographical themes, but rather that he gained ground in this very literary and ideological discourse. Although Petrarch stresses his insecurity in saying if he ever would reach eternal fame, he nevertheless departs (via the construction of posterity as an addressee) from the conviction that his literary works will render him immortal. Cautiously Petrarch opens the gates to let in the 'difficult' autobiographical concepts of *fama* and *gloria*.

The example of Ovid was especially appropriate for the re-introduction of autobiographical self-consciousness in a Christian context. Why? Ovid had, as I have shown elsewhere, a distinct rhetorical interest in presenting his life as a chain of failures.²⁰ The autobiographical *ethos* he offers is in fact very suitable for an author who had to operate in a Christian context of the obliged *humilitas*-attitude.

Petrarch was certainly inspired by Ovid in this. It is especially interesting in this respect that he took over the poet's self-portrait as an exile. For Ovid, of course, it was a physical reality. For Petrarch, only partly: when he wrote his autobiography (he lived then in Arqua in the neighborhood of Padua) he was certainly not prohibited to return to his father's town of Florence; on the contrary he had been invited several times to live there. Nevertheless, in his autobiography he presented himself as an exile ('I was born in exile, in Arezzo'),²¹ describing his youth as a true odyssey.²² Moreover, Petrarch depicts

²⁰ ENENKEL, 'Rhetorische Strategien und Interpretation von Ovid, *Tristia* IV,10'; for other literature on Ovid's autobiography and Ovid's *Tristia* see this article.

²¹ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 2: *Aretii in exilio natus sum*.

²² PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 12ff.; *Familiars* I,1,21–24 etc.; for Petrarch's autobiographical report of the odyssey of his youth cf. ENENKEL, 'Die Grundlegung humanistischer Selbstpräsentation im Brief-Corpus: [...] Petrarca's *Familiars* [...]', (2002), 370ff.; for Petrarch's moral discussion of travelling cf. ENENKEL's commentary on *De vita solitaria*, 369–73.

himself as a spiritual exile: a stranger everywhere on earth (*peregrinus ubique*), nowhere at home, an exile in each single moment of his earthly life.²³ Petrarch has transformed Ovid's physical situation into a *religious concept*. As one will note in passing, Petrarch, by identifying himself with Ovid, has presented himself once more as a classical author.

Did Petrarch fully present himself in terms of a *poet of antiquity*? This is not the case. He invented an intelligent method to express both his claim and his hesitations. A most interesting aspect of the *Epistola posteritati* is that the author splits up his personality into the young Petrarch and the Petrarch of old age. Young Petrarch lived according to the system of values of an ancient poet. He admired *fama* and *gloria* and achieved it in the form of his coronation as a poet on the Roman Capitol in 1341. Old Petrarch detaches himself from these values: he still owns the skills of the Latin poet, but does not live any more according to these values. Moral philosophy and the bible are of much more importance for him: 'I had a well-balanced rather than a keen intellect, fit for all kinds of good and wholesome study, but especially inclined to moral philosophy and poetry. Yet in the course of time I abandoned the latter, when I found delight in the scriptures in which I felt the hidden sweetness which I once despised; for nowadays I limit poetry to embellishment.'²⁴

Notwithstanding these assertions of a clear spiritual development, the autobiography displays double values of the author at the time of writing. On the one hand the author declares that he does not agree any more with the glory of his youth; on the other hand, he does not hesitate to render his coronation as a poet laureate the most important and the longest part of the chronological narrative of his life, even longer than in Boccaccio's laudatory *Biography of Petrarch*. It is clear that the author is still proud of his identity as an 'ancient' poet although he has obviously strong reasons to represent himself in a different way.

The double values have much to do with Petrarch's search for an adequate autobiographer's *ethos*. How does the ethos of the 'classical'

²³ For Petrarch's self-representation as a traveller cf. ENENKEL, 'Autobiografie en etnografie', 21–32. Petrarch's subtle self-construction as a traveller was interpreted by Voigt unconvincingly as spontaneous descriptions composed during the travels (*Italienische Berichte*).

²⁴ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 9: *Ingenio fui equo potius quam acuto, ad omne bonum et salubre studium apto, sed ad moralem precipue philosophiam et ad poeticam prono. Quam ipsam processu temporis neglexi, sacris literis delectatus, in quibus sensi dulcedinem abditam, quam aliquando contempseram, poeticis literis non nisi ad ornatum reservatis.*

Latin poet: the belief in glory, fame, and immortality via literature go together with the obligatory Christian values of humility (*humilitas*), of the dispraise of the transitory world (*contemptus mundi*)? The majority of Petrarch's contemporaries were very much aware that it was not proper, and not even allowed to pay so much attention to the individual. The concepts of *humilitas* and *contemptus mundi* inevitably bring about the danger that writing an autobiography would be considered an act of vanity (*vanitas*), of immodesty or even impiety. Thus, it was of crucial importance to the autobiographer to avoid such an impression and to subject his mode of presentation to the demands of *humilitas* and of the *contemptus mundi*.

Since in Boccaccio's *Biography of Petrarch*, the direct model for the *Epistola posteritati* as regards its theme, the Florentine poet was presented in a very laudatory way i.e. as a great poet, a morally excellent man, a beautiful person etc., it will be clear that a special effort of the author was required to create an acceptable autobiographer's ethos. Petrarch had to do his very best to persuade his readers of his humility and modesty. The method of this process of transformation can be summed up as follows: to weaken, to minimize, to eliminate Boccaccio's favourable judgements, and in some cases, to turn them upside down. To give but a few examples: whereas Boccaccio attributed to him a worldwide fame expressed in superlatives (*gloriosissima*—'most glorious'), Petrarch qualified it as 'petty' and 'obscure' and added his doubts whether it 'will reach far into either space or time'.²⁵ It is significant for Petrarch's mode of self-representation that with the first thing he says about himself (after the preface-like introductory paragraph), he pays tribute to the demands of the *contemptus mundi*: he asserts that he is 'a mortal man' (*mortalis homuncio*) like the rest of us.²⁶ Here we have again the double values of the *Epistola posteritati*: the confession of mortality, of course, only makes sense as an antidote for Petrarch's sweetest dream: his immortality as a Latin poet.

A humanist, one may expect, would be inclined to represent himself as a master of Latin language and express his pride in his rhetorical, poetical and grammatical skills. This does not apply, however, to the *Epistola posteritati*. Petrarch did not go any further than to claim that

²⁵ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 1.

²⁶ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 2: *Fui autem vestro de grege unus, mortalis homuntio* [. . .].

he had a 'well-balanced rather than a keen intellect.'²⁷ He did so not because he was not convinced of his qualities as a humanist, but in order to create an acceptable autobiographer's ethos. From the fifteenth century onwards, as we will see, such a strong display of modesty was not any longer required. The audience of humanist writings generally accepted the author's pride in his intellectual qualities.

The problem which Petrarch met in creating an acceptable ethos turned out to be especially difficult when he had to deal with his coronation as a poet laureate. If he had presented his coronation in a straightforward, albeit laudatory narrative (similar to Boccaccio's), he would have taken the risk of being accused of vanity. Therefore, he presents himself as thoroughly critical of his coronation by maintaining that he did not deserve it,²⁸ and that the judgement of others, especially of king Robert of Anjou (who wanted to have him crowned), was much too favourable: 'Love and partiality for my age prevailed in him over devotion to the truth'. He explicitly states: 'Today I do not approve either of his (sc. Robert's) judgement or mine or that of everyone else who felt the same.'²⁹

Whereas the autobiographer's ethos required in Petrarch's intellectual context prevented the author from displaying his humanist skills in an open way, it did not prevent him from introducing a—with respect to medieval autobiographical writing—rather unusual mode of self-representation, viz. as an individual. Thus, Petrarch's autobiography is full of individualistic features of his personality: his inclination to friendship, his hatred of Avignon, his love of solitude, his dislike of banquets and elaborate food, his inclination to fits of anger, his extraordinary interest in Roman antiquity, his romantic love of the city of Rome, his aesthetic appreciation of the landscape of Vaucluse, his close and personal relationships with his patrons, even such detailed information as that after his sixtieth year he was wearing glasses. Petrarch used a distinct pattern in rendering those individual traits: he says that he 'loves' (*placet*) or 'dislikes' (*displacet*) certain things. Within the framework of all these *placet*'s and *displacet*'s, we learn something about the personal feelings and motivations of the individual called Petrarch. Occasionally even emotional outbursts can

²⁷ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 9.

²⁸ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 22–25.

²⁹ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 24: *Hodie et ipsius et meum et omnium idem sentientium iudicium non probo: plus enim in eum valuit amor et etatis favor quam veri studium.*

be registered: the indignation with which he puts forward the biting remark that he calls Avignon 'his home',³⁰ the emotional exclamation '*infelix!*' ('unlucky man!') with regard to pope Urbanus V,³¹ or the emphatic exclamation 'woe' (*heu*) with regard to the loss of his patron Jacopo da Carrara.³²

Thus, Petrarch used individual traits, especially individual preferences and dislikes, as the basic elements for his auto-historical discourse. He does not question or explain them; he just considers them as facts. We may presume that he considered them interesting for his readers. This is quite remarkable if one considers the tradition of Medieval biography which painstakingly refrained from individual details.

In this respect, however, Petrarch's self-representation displays a new confidence in the importance (and maybe acceptability) of individualistic biographical detail. Notwithstanding the requirements of modesty, he considered himself as a superstar in Latin literature and learning, whose personal preferences were just because of this worth while to be transmitted to his present and future audience.

How does the emphasis on individuality go together with the obligatory *humilitas*? As one can observe in his *Epistola posteritati*, Petrarch does not describe himself as an ideal person i.e. an *exemplum virtutis*. Instead of characterizing certain features of his behaviour as virtuous, he brings them back to individualistic preferences and nothing else. This anti-idealizing tendency fits remarkably well with the intention of rendering an individualistic personality. It was in itself, however, not altogether a sign of a genuinely humble self-report.

That Petrarch is willing to loosen the ties of *humilitas* is certainly to be seen with respect to his social self-definition. In this he goes far beyond the level of his contemporaries' expectations. I am sure that many of them will have considered this part of his self-representation as exaggerated, if not inadequate. For his later humanist colleagues, however, the emphasis on the social self-definition turned out to be exemplary.

What was essential in this respect? Not so much the humanist's social offspring, but his relations to his patrons: princes, kings and the high clergy. As concerns his patrons, Petrarch drew a even more

³⁰ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 14: *Domum voco Avinionense illud exilium*.

³¹ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 12.

³² PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 29.

favourable picture of himself than Boccaccio had done in his laudative assertions. Petrarch openly claims that he 'was fortunate to the point of envy in his associations with princes and kings and in his friendships with nobles', and that he was 'loved and courted (sic—*coluerunt*)' by the 'greatest kings of this age'.³³

Petrarch's pride, with respect to his patrons, is remarkable indeed. He underlines more than once in the *Epistola posteritati* that, in his relations with his patrons, *he* always was the man in charge and that *he* could dictate the conditions. This self-representation does not seem to correspond to reality: It looks more like a *mundus inversus*. The traditional disadvantages of court life seem to have been totally absent in Petrarch's case. He claims that he always has had unrestrained liberty; that—as an almost absurd climax—it was not he who lived with them but they who lived with him: 'And I stayed with some of them in such a way that they were, so to speak, my guests, so that I derived no annoyances [. . .] from their eminence.'³⁴ Petrarch's patron, cardinal Colonna, seems to have been extraordinarily eager to please his servant: Petrarch stresses that when once upon a time he sent a letter to him in the evening, he received the answer already the next morning 'before nine o'clock'.³⁵ This extremely exact dating, of course, is not an argument for the humanist's precision in writing his autobiography, but more an argument for the humanist's eagerness to prove his social respectability. The same is true for Petrarch's portrait of his relationships with King Robert of Anjou and Jacopo da Carrara, the Lord of Padua, who, as the humanist claims, courted him in such an extraordinarily polite way that he finally became curious to see with his own eyes what this was all about: 'Through his messengers and letters I was troubled for many years with such earnest entreaties beyond the Alps when I was there, and wherever I was throughout Italy; and my friendship was so sought by him that, though I hoped for nothing from the well-to-do, I

³³ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 8: *Principum ac regum familiaritatibus et nobilium amicitiiis usque ad invidiam fortunatus fui. Maximi regum [et] mee etatis et amarunt et coluerunt me.*

³⁴ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 8: *Et ita cum quibusdam fui, ut ipsi quodammodo mecum essent et eminentie eorum nullum tedium, commoda multa perceperim.* Concerning his relationship with his patron Giovanni Cardinal Colonna, Petrarch claims that he lived at the Cardinal's as if he were in his own house: 'I stayed with [. . .] Cardinal Giovanni Colonna, not as under a master but as [. . .] with a most loving brother or rather with myself in my own home (*imo mecum et propria mea in domo*)' (*Epistola posteritati* 15).

³⁵ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 22: *ante horam tertiam.*

decided at last to go to him and see what this insistence on the part of a great man, unknown to me, meant.³⁶

This emphasis on equality, freedom etc. is certainly no adequate portrayal of Petrarch's actual life as a courtier, but more a claim to establish a new kind of intellectual pursuit. In depicting the relations with his patrons in this extraordinary way, Petrarch tried to prove the social respectability of Humanism, of the *studia humanitatis*: if princes, even kings, treat the ambassador of these studies in such a honorable way, these studies must be respectable.

Raffaele Reggio and Helius Eobanus Hessus

The *studia humanitatis* became very respectable, indeed. The social establishment supported them, as Petrarch claimed, although not always in such an ideal way as Petrarch's patrons according to the Florentine's autobiographical self-representation. Literary fame via Neolatin literature and humanistic scholarship became a generally-accepted category of social life and culture. The princes themselves considered it interesting to participate in this culture of fame. We will return to this point later on with respect to Raffaele Reggio's *Commentary on Ovid's Metamorphoses*. The humanists, from the fifteenth century onward, were not any longer obliged to defend themselves on account of their search for fame. To strive for fame, on the contrary, was considered as virtuous behaviour.

This change in values can be demonstrated in the autobiographical documents. The elegy *Eobanus Posteritati* of the German humanist and Latin poet Helius Eobanus Hessus (Eoban Koch), written some hundred and fifty years after Petrarch's autobiography,³⁷ is especially interesting in this respect, for several reasons: Eobanus's autobiography, like Petrarch's, is also shaped as a letter to posterity (although in verse). It is also an imitation of Ovid's *Tristia* IV,10,³⁸ and displays even more intertextuality with Ovid's poetry. Accordingly, Eobanus's identification with Ovid goes much further than does

³⁶ PETRARCH, *Epistola posteritati* 28.

³⁷ For the text see Vredeveld's edition. For Eobanus Hessus see KRAUSE, *Helius Eobanus Hessus*; GRÄBER-EBERBACH, *Helius Eobanus Hessus*; TRILLITZSCH, 'Der Erfurter Humanist und 'Dichterkönig' Helius Eobanus Hessus'; ELLINGER, *Geschichte der neulateinischen Literatur*, vol. II (1929–33), 3–23.

³⁸ For this aspect, cf. ENENKEL, 'Autobiographisches Ethos und Ovid-Überbietung'.

Petrarch's, and he engages, as we will see, in an intriguing dialogue with his literary idol in respect of his self-definition. Because of these ingredients a comparison with Petrarch's *Epistola posteritati* is especially illuminating for the changes in humanist self-representation.

Literary fame clearly is Eobanus's point of departure. Differently from Petrarch, he feels no need to seek excuses for this nor to question his fame. On the contrary: fame is for him so valuable that he renders it as a goddess: the goddess called *Posteritas*, the personification of posterity viz. the poet's eternal fame. Needless to say, *Posteritas* is no antique Roman deity. She is Eobanus's invention. In his autobiographical elegy he depicts himself as an ardent lover of this new goddess. The work in fact is constructed as an urgent love-letter to her. His whole life, the humanist poet intends to express, should be regarded as a love-letter to the goddess of literary fame.

In this beautiful invention, the humanist's search for fame has acquired an openly erotic dimension. Striving for fame is identified with sexual longing. Eobanus's love is an extremely attractive, though difficult, lady. Or, one should rather understand, she is all the more attractive, because she is not easy to conquer. Lady *Posteritas* is almost as evasive as Lady *Fortune*: the lover who thinks that he has conquered her is fooled.³⁹ Latin verse, of course, is not at all an easy business, and even less so for non-native-speakers. Its cultivation costs an enormous effort; in fact, one has to dedicate one's whole life to it. Eobanus, as he tells us, surely did so: Lady *Posteritas* was his first and dearest love. He has phantasized about her from his earliest youth, even at a moment when he did not yet know Latin:

*But, you know it, you were always my dearest love,
O you, nearly as dear to me as my own life.
I saw you in my phantasy earlier than I could express you in Latin
[. . .]
A young man, nearly still a boy, I devoted all my talent to you,
As I was longing for to be only a small part in your huge army of lovers.*⁴⁰

In his self-representation, as will be become clear, Eobanus did not hesitate to admit that he strives for fame. Moreover—which is all

³⁹ HESSUS, *Eobanus Posteritati* 7–8; 17–18: *Quo magis appetis, magis hoc fugis improba retro:/ Ludis amatores, lubrica Diva, tuos [. . .] Lubrica decedens, veniens simulatque resistens/ Non tua deprehendi mira figura potest.*

⁴⁰ HESSUS, *Eobanus Posteritati* 35–40: *Attamen ut noris, primam te semper amavi,/ O animae certe cura secunda meae./ Te prius ex animo finxi, quam dicere possem/[. . .]/ Ingenium tibi pene puer iuvenile dicavi,/ Esse tuae cupiens pars quota militiae.*

the more remarkable—he is not at all shy of praising himself: he boasts that he will bring fame to his native town Frankenberg in Hessen. In doing so, he even does not refrain from a lie: in fact, his place of birth was not Frankenberg, but the little village of Halgehausen or Bockendorf (something like ‘Goatham’). At his birth, he also claims, supernatural signs appeared on the sky: the *Lyra* was sparkling much brighter than usual in order to announce the birth of a great poet (59–60). Small wonder that ‘one of the leading poets of the country’ prophesized: ‘Hessus, little boy, you will be the glory of the sacred spring.’⁴¹ In the following chronological report of his life Eobanus praises his intelligence, his eagerness to learn, his early maturity viz. ability to write Latin verse, the enormous size of his poetic oeuvre, and so on. Especially eye-catching is his early maturity: he was only fifteen years old, he claims, when he published his first work. Again, we discover a lie: when Eobanus published his first work, *De pugna studentum Erphordiensium cum quibusdam coniuratis nebulonibus*, *On the student riots in Erfurt*, printed 1506 at W. Stürmer’s press, he was in fact already eighteen years old. The finishing touch of this self-glorification seems to be the praise of his bodily beauty:

*My body was beautiful, especially my arms and legs, and was able to endure
hard labour,*

*My chest, my sides, my thighs were very strong.
I had a beautiful male figure, without weak points, and a
Remarkable face, and I was high spirited.*⁴²

What is remarkable is not so much Eobanus’s face (especially when we take into account that the author of these verses was only a very young man), but the fact that a humanist could openly present himself in such a way. This is all the more noteworthy, since Eobanus does not seem to have been inspired in this by his antique exemplar: Ovid’s autobiography. Ovid, as we have seen, did not praise himself at all, but was eager to underline the failures and the misery of his life. Of this we find no traces in Eobanus’s autobiography. Eobanus even has dismissed the topic of the poet in exile which had turned out so fruitful for Petrarch’s self-representation.

⁴¹ HESSUS, *Eobanus Posteritati* 98: *Hesse, puer, sacri gloria fontis eris.*

⁴² HESSUS, *Eobanus Posteritati* 137–40: *Corpus erat membrisque decens patiensque laborum/Robore firma suo, brachia, crura, latus./Forma virum decuisse potest, sine labe decensque/Frons diversa, animi spiritus altus erat.*

Now, to admit that one is searching for glory and to praise oneself in Eobanus's style are different things. A humanist can strive for fame but nevertheless be unwilling to praise, for instance, his bodily beauty. I explicitly do not want to suggest that there is a linear development from Petrarch to Eobanus. In my judgment, Eobanus involves us in a literary game. The rules of this game are not necessarily the same as the rules of sixteenth century social codes. Thus, we should first try to understand the rules of the literary game, and then interpret Eobanus's eagerness to play this game with us.

Eobanus's literary game is defined by a double set of rules. The first set is explained by the fact that the autobiography is part of Eobanus's *Heroic Epistles* (the *Epistulae Heroicum Christianarum*). The author of the rules of the heroic epistle is again Ovid, the inventor of the genre. The basic rules imply that a lover expresses his love to his absent beloved, and that he presents rhetorical arguments why his beloved should come back to her/him and answer his/her love. Thus, a heroic epistle is always a rhetorical text with a clearly defined argument.

The second set of rules is not prescribed by Ovid himself, but by the principle of *imitatio* and *aemulatio*. The rules imply that Eobanus, as the *aemulator* of Ovid, tries to surpass his example in every respect—which means, also with regard to the content, the poet's life. Eobanus has combined these two sets of rules, as we will see, in a brilliant way.

What does the first set of rules imply for Eobanus's autobiography? It implies that it is essential for the game that the author tries to persuade his beloved, Lady *Posteritas*, to answer his deep love. How will he achieve his rhetorical goal? By persuading her that he is a worthwhile, attractive, and very interesting man. As one will understand, modesty is not so much required to achieve this goal. On the contrary, the man should be somewhat daring in advertising himself.

If Eobanus had humbly presented himself as the 'man from Gotham' who obtained a provincial school education and studied several years in Erfurt (which was all true), could he have hoped to impress Lady Posterity? Is she willing to have an affair with a provincial from peasant offspring who later became a poor student? One will admit that, in the framework of these rules, Eobanus was allowed to exaggerate somewhat. Imagine: Lady *Posteritas* is delicate, and she has a whole army of lovers. One should really do one's best to draw her attention. Supranatural phenomena, prophecies will achieve this. The prophecy that this boy 'will be the future glory of the sacred spring

[of the Muses]' will, interested in poetry as Lady *Posteritas* is, focus her attention on the author of this autobiography. All the more so, if the promising young man shows signs of early maturity and turns out to be a prolific poet at a very young age. The same goes, at least partly, for Eobanus's praise of his bodily beauty. Of course, Lady *Posteritas* will be more charmed by an attractive man. Whether she required as much beauty as Eobanus ascribed to himself, is another question.

How should we interpret this? Eobanus certainly did his best to follow the rules; but in fact he did more than that. Obviously, he enjoyed the rules of the game very much—maybe too much. This can be explained, in my opinion, by a combination of motives such as his humble offspring, his ambitious character and his young age, together with the fact that his fame as a Latin poet was not yet established. Eobanus considered it necessary to advertise himself so strongly, *because* he wanted to become famous as a humanist and Latin poet. *Thus, he considered autobiography as a means to create fame.* His literary invention perfectly suited this goal.

Let us now consider the second set of rules. Eobanus's example was clearly Ovid's autobiography, as appears already from the first lines. If Eobanus had presented his life in the same way as did Ovid—as a chain of failures and misery—he would have neglected or frustrated the first set of rules. He surely was afraid that *Posteritas* would never fall in love with such a miserable man. Thus, it was only a little step to present himself in a better way and to surpass Ovid in each single aspect. This constant *aemulatio* with Ovid, by the way, is the reason why Eobanus lied about his age with respect to his first publication. Ovid had mentioned one (at the first sight) positive aspect: his early maturity as a poet. He says that he had shaved his beard only once or twice when he published his first work, which means that he was sixteen or seventeen years old. In order to surpass this, Eobanus made himself younger: fifteen years of age. This lie had consequences for the chronology of Eobanus's autobiography: he had to antedate all of his works (which mattered for his self-presentation, since he was only twenty six years old at the time when he wrote his autobiography).

By comparing himself with Ovid, Eobanus also identified himself with the Latin 'classical' poet and presented himself as a kind of *modern Ovid*. This, indeed, was an important part of Eobanus's strategy: he wanted to advertise himself in the literary networks of the *Respublica litteraria* as *Germany's new Ovid*, Ovidius redivivus. The publication of

his *Heroides* was crucial with respect to this claim, and his autobiography was meant to function as the persuasive argument for it.

Ovid himself, by then, had received a remarkable reception among the humanists. He was (aside from Virgil who naturally is in a category of his own) the author most frequently used for self-definition, for autobiographical *imitatio* and *aemulatio*. He enjoyed an enormous reputation and was considered in various ways as a major source of eternal fame.

Interestingly enough, Ovid had reached, according to the humanists, his eternal fame only recently. In former centuries, as the humanists claim, he was neglected, or, as they put it, his works suffered from the state of exile, like their author. The Italian humanist Jacobus Musaeus states in his introductory poem to Raffaele Reggio's Ovid:

When the poet [Ovid] was deprived of life by adverse fate,
He was so far from the people of Latium
He did not receive the honours deserved by the dead;
Half of his fame was buried in the grave.
The works of the sacred poet were swallowed by the darkness,
The barbarians squandered his excellent works.⁴³

The humanists represented themselves as the saviours of the classical authors from the darkness of ignorance. They used Ovid's exile as a paradigm for this self-representation. In the Middle ages, they maintain, the poet was still in exile which means that he was neglected and that he was transmitted in an incorrect way in texts full of grammatical (and metrical) mistakes. Thus, the humanists represented themselves as people who possess by their knowledge, especially by their grammatical and philological abilities, the power to *make restitution to an ancient author of the fame and glory* which he deserves. The humanists presented themselves as *distributors of fame*.

This is very much true for Raffaele Reggio, a humanist working in Padua and Venice as a professor of rhetoric who published a critical edition of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* with, as he claims, the first *Commentary* (*Enarrationes*) on this text (first published 1493, in Venice).⁴⁴ Via Reggio's commented edition which was reissued many times, Ovid

⁴³ Cf. the titlepage: *Mox quoque dum vita est fatis privatus iniquis/Tam procul a latis coetibus exul erat./Defuncto meriti non reddebantur honores./Gloriaque ipsius semisepulta fuit./Obsita erant tenebris sacri monumenta poetae./Fuderat eximias Barbarum hostis opes.*

⁴⁴ For Reggio's Commentary cf. GUTHMÜLLER, 'Lateinische und Volkssprachliche Kommentare zu Ovid's *Metamorphosen*'.

was spread in humanist circles and beyond, in large parts of Europe. When Raffaele Reggio issued a revised edition of his *Commentary* in 1513, he states that, so far not less than 50 000 exemplars have been sold: an almost incredible figure in the world of printing and publishing in the fifteenth century. Thus, the humanist Raffaele Reggio proudly presents himself as the one who has brought about the fame of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: 'After we have shed light on it (*illustrata*) with our *Commentary* (*Enarrationes*), Ovid's outstanding work *Metamorphoses* is now read and reread wherever the Latin language is in use to such a degree that, as is said, already fifty thousand exemplars have been produced.'⁴⁵ The phrase 'ubicunque Romana est in usu lingua' refers to Ovid's self-representation: the Roman poet was confident that he would be read wherever and as long as the Latin language is in use. Raffaele's use of the term *illustrare* is telling and it denotes at the same time the humanists' main activity—to comment on ancient texts and to 'elucidate' them—and to 'make (somebody) famous'.

In Raffaele's dedicatory letters appears another aspect of the humanist's self-definition as distributor of fame. They considered biography to be, as indicated above, a *conditio sine qua non* of fame. Certainly we not do possess a biography of each author of antiquity. One of the authors lacking a writer's biography (*per definitionem* in prose) was Ovid. Thus, in order to *illustrare Ovidium*, Raffaele decided to provide the reader with a description of his life published together with the *Commentary* on the *Metamorphoses*.⁴⁶

The distribution of fame works, of course, to an even greater extent the other way around. The humanist who succeeds in attaching his name to Ovid will gain fame and glory. He will literally attach his name to the ancient author. A glance at the title page of Raffaele's Ovid may illustrate this: first comes the name of the ancient author (P. OVIDII NASONIS) and the title of his work (*Metamorphoseos libri XV*), but then immediately comes the name of the humanist commentator (*Raphaelis Regii*) and the specification that he is the author of a commentary. The name of the ancient author is printed

⁴⁵ REGGIO, Letter of Dedication to the Revised edition, addressed to Philippus Cyulanus, ambassador of the Hungarian king in Venice, from May 26th, 1513: *Nam Ovidii Metamorphosis preclarum in primis opus, posteaquam enarrationibus nostris fuit illustrata, sic ubicunque Romana est in usu lingua, lectitatur, ut in quinquaginta millia exemplaribus et amplius iam dicatur fuisse descripta.*

⁴⁶ REGGIO, f. +Vr. *Publius Ovidius Naso Sulmoni, quae urbs est in pelignis [. . .] ut quanta sit vis illius affectus aperte ostenderetur.*

in capitals and the name of the commentator in minuscules—this means that the ancient author is more important: in other words, that he will be the source of fame. One may conclude that, in his proud self-presentation in his dedicatory letter from 1513, Raffaele Reggio puts considerably more emphasis on his commentary than even the title page suggests.

Fame plays another important role in Reggio's edition of Ovid, and this aspect brings us back to Petrarch's *Epistola posteritati* with its emphasis on the relations of the humanist with his patrons. For Raffaele Reggio (as for other humanists) patrons were obviously of vital importance. Reggio dedicated the first edition of his commentary on Ovid to Francesco Gonzaga, duke of Mantua (1493). How did the humanist define himself in his relation to the dedicatee?

The first thing that is clear is that Reggio did not present himself in a humble way, although there was a remarkable distance in social hierarchy between the humanist and the dedicatee. It is true that Reggio praises the duke. But he never suggests that his own social position is much lower. It seems, as though Reggio in his dedicatory epistle has adapted the social hierarchy in a peculiar way, having a humanist concept in mind that is frequently present from the second decade of the fifteenth century on: the *Respublica litteraria*. This concept implies that the humanists felt themselves part of a special community ('state') in which other rules and certainly another hierarchy are valid in comparison with those of 'normal' life: in the community of the learned the value of an individual does not depend on his social offspring but on his knowledge and learning. The concept of the *Respublica litteraria* legitimates Reggio in presenting himself on the same level as the prince. This principle of self-definition is quite common in fifteenth and sixteenth century Humanism. One may compare, for instance, the way in which Reggio's contemporary Erasmus usually defines himself with regard to the powerful. Erasmus considered himself as part of a new nobility, the nobility of learning and knowledge.

The concept of the self-conscious *Respublica litteraria* is connected with the humanists' estimation of their importance for the princes and patrons. They defined themselves as extremely important—as distributors of the princes' fame. The humanists render the princes immortal by putting their names as dedicatees on their works. Thus, they present themselves as priests or intermediaries so to speak between earthly life and immortality. The humanists can offer something very

precious: immortality and eternal fame. When they have finished a literary work (as they often express it in their prefaces), they deliberate who would be worthy of such a precious present.⁴⁷ They should always have special reasons: for example that the dedicatee has done so much for the humanist; the dedicatee is a very virtuous/learned person; the dedicatee has a special interest in the subject etc.

In the letters of dedication prefixed to his commentary on Ovid Reggio unfolds a similar argument: Francesco Gonzaga is 'worthy of the present' (*munere dignus*) because of his *liberalitas*, *benignitas* and *magnificentia*⁴⁸—which clearly means that he has supported the humanist in one way or the other. Furthermore Reggio connects the principle that virtue deserves fame (*laus, honor et gloria*) with Gonzaga's virtuous behaviour.⁴⁹ That fact that his name from this very moment will be associated with the *Commentary on Ovid* implies that Gonzaga will be immortal. The future readers of the commentary will frequently venerate (*celebrare*) not only Ovid (and Reggio), but also Francesco Gonzaga. The same argument occurs in the dedicatory epistle to Philippus Cyulanus prefixed to the revised edition. Reggio dedicates it, as he states, to Cyulanus, in order to have his name venerated everywhere in the Christian world together with Ovid's. Thus, according to Reggio, the humanist obtains an extremely powerful position: he can render a human being immortal or deprive him of immortality.

In dedicatory epistles, of course, no self-portrait or autobiographical report in the proper sense is required. In most of the dedicatory letters the self-representation is focused on the relation to the patron, on the relation of work to author, on humanist business, and on the usage of the present work in the contemporary context. The core business of Humanism was, one might reasonably maintain, classical philology (grammar or textual criticism), rhetoric, and poetry. But many humanists are not inclined to define themselves in this

⁴⁷ The formular *Cogitanti mihi*, most frequently used in humanist dedications, goes back to the dedication of Cicero's *De oratore* (I, 1, 1) to his brother.

⁴⁸ REGGIO, f. +iiiiir: *Cogitanti mihi iucundissime princeps, cui potissimum meas in Ovidii Metamorphosin enarrationes dicarem, tu in primis occurristi, qui hoc quantulocunque munere dignus esse videreris. Tantus est enim cum aliarum virtutum, tum singularis ac prope divinae liberalitatis tuae splendor, ut ab omnibus celebrari immortalitatisque consecrari merearis [...]. Tu vero nihil pulchrius honorificentiusque esse existimas quam divitias et opes, quibus in dies magis magisque abundas, ad magnificentiam liberalitatemque conferre.*

⁴⁹ REGGIO, Ibidem.: *Excellenti nanque virtuti ex philosophorum omnium sententia laus, honor et gloria debetur.*

circumspect way. They tend to increase their importance by universalizing their knowledge.

The professor of rhetoric and philologist Raffaele Reggio is a clear example of this tendency. What was, in fact, his achievement? He has provided us with a critical edition of a mythological work and has written a commentary on it. Thus, one could define it as philological. Reggio, however, has defined it in a different way: first as he states, his commented edition of the *Metamorphoses* functions as a *manual on warfare*; secondly, it is a *manual on civil life*—the reader learns how to react in all the different situations of civil life; thirdly, it is a *Mirror of Princes*; and fourth, it is an universal *Description of the World*.

It is clear that the humanist Reggio defines himself as a distributor of all kinds of knowledge; as an advisor in the main problems of civil life; as an explicator of the riddles of the world and the universe. Reggio claims in his commentary that he explains not only mythology and history but also geography, astrology, music, rhetorics, ethics and physics.⁵⁰ The self-consciousness of Humanism is in this respect ever growing in the fifteenth and in the first half of the sixteenth century; the humanists define themselves as the professors of universal knowledge. One can estimate how much has changed since the second half of the fourteenth century if one compares to this attitude Petrarch's display of humility in the *Epistola posteritati* in which he limits his knowledge to moral philosophy and poetry. The humanist's self-definition, from the fifteenth century onwards is, in fact, a glorification of humanistic science. It is small wonder that the humanists considered their claim of eternal fame reasonable and legitimate.

⁵⁰ REGGIO, *f.* +iiiiir.

RHETORIC OF INNOVATION AND RECOURSE TO TRADITION IN HUMANIST PEDAGOGICAL DISCOURSE

Bert Roest

Introduction: the humanist claim to novelty

Though I am not a specialist in humanist thought and learning, my current research on late medieval and early modern pedagogical ideals and specimens of religious instruction literature time and again confronts me with the issue of humanism as a programme of educational and moral reform, and with the humanist pedagogical discourse as a competitor to those associated with the medieval period.

Both fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century humanist pedagogical works and related humanist instruction manuals exude a strong sense of novelty. Almost without exception, humanist reformers present their works as unprecedented, and filling a void. A case in point is Erasmus of Rotterdam (c. 1469–1536). In his general pedagogical works, such as *De Civilitate Morum Puerilium*, *Declamatio de Pueris Instituendis*, *De Ratione Studii*, as well as in his various works of religious instruction, such as his *Enchiridion Militis Christiani*, Erasmus laments the decline of learning and true piety since antiquity. Thus, the *Enchiridion*, which amounts to a catechistic handbook, presents a ‘new’ model of moral and religious civility, exploring the correspondence between exterior and interior man. Both exterior and interior man are disciplined through the appropriation of manners (creating civility), through the *studia humanitatis* (leading to a proper *eruditio*) and the cultivation of true piety, three elements that are considered to be mutually dependent. In this text Erasmus at several points declares that he is departing from tradition and dealing with issues that have been dolefully neglected for a long time. Hence, the prefatory letter to the *Enchiridion* edition of 1518 contrasts Erasmus’ own programme of religious instruction with the ‘useless’ production of Sentences commentaries and *summae* of his theological predecessors and contemporaries. As Erasmus tells us: ‘There are almost as many commentaries on the Sentences as you can name theologians. Of makers of summaries there is no end, one cannot count them,’ to continue somewhat further

on: 'How can a mass of such volumes ever teach us how to live, when a whole lifetime would not suffice to read them.'¹

Many of Erasmus' humanist colleagues harbouring comparable reform programmes also implied that they were departing from established tradition, initiating a new era in form and content: an era in which man could come into his own. This sense of novelty had found its first strong formulation in the writings of Petrarch (1304–1374).² Petrarch saw a large gap between a golden antiquity and the darkness of his own time, and tried to reach back to this lost world, an urge seemingly absent in earlier medieval authors.³ After Petrarch, this same opinion was voiced by a long chain of humanist-inclined authors of writings on education and the nature of scholarship, who lamented the depravity of the more recent past, and who hailed the accomplishments of the ancients. Famous in this regard are treatises by Pietro Paolo Vergerio (ca. 1370–1444),⁴ Leonardo Bruni (1370–1444) and Flavio Biondo (1392–1462), Maffeo Vegio of Lodi (1407–1458),⁵ Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini (1405–1464),⁶ and Battista Guarino (fl. c. 1450).⁷

Without exception, these authors exhibited a tendency to lament the loss of learning during the 'dark ages,' and to present the total time span between the fall of the Roman Empire in the West in the fifth and the appearance of Petrarch in the fourteenth century as a long and bleak period of decline in learning and in morals. They contrasted this tragic epoch of ignorance with the rejuvenation of the arts and sciences in their own time, which resulted from the recovery of ancient learning.⁸

¹ ERASMUS, *Collected Works LXVI*, 9.

² Notably in his treatise *De sui ipsius et multorum ignorantia*; English translation by Hans Nachod, in: *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, 47–133. MÜLLER, *Bildung und Erziehung*, 23.

³ Many of whom would, of course, lament the general decline of the world, with recourse to the well-established *senectudo mundi* topos.

⁴ His *De Ingeniis Moribus et Liberalibus Studiis Adolescentiae* (1404) has been hailed by historians from Burckhardt to P.O. Kristeller as the first truly pedagogical treatise. See also ROBEY, 'Humanism and Education', 27–58. Vergerio was associated with the school of Vittorino da Feltre. His *De Ingeniis Moribus* deals with the necessity of liberal studies; these include history (assigned the most important place), moral philosophy and rhetoric.

⁵ *De Educatione Liberorum et Eorum Claris Moribus*.

⁶ *Tractatus de Liberorum Educatione*.

⁷ He held the chair of rhetoric and poetics at the University of Bologna. Among his writings, we can single out *De Ordine Docendi et Studendi* (1459).

⁸ For more information on the humanist lament on medieval ignorance, see: WEISINGER, 'Who began the Revival of Learning', 625–638 & WEISINGER, 'Renaissance Accounts', 105–118.

Historians accepting this humanist claim have therefore defined Renaissance humanism as the restoration of man's natural dignity and humanity. 'And this restoration or re-activation or rebirth of natural man necessarily resulted in attributing to him precisely that which he was said to have lost through baptismal rebirth—autonomy and independence and legitimacy of standing in the public and social fields . . .'⁹ Historians of Renaissance culture have not been alone in taking the humanist boast at face value. Many nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars interested in the history of pedagogy, from F.J. Niethammer and Schleiermacher to their present-day successors, have accepted the humanist claim to novelty. Following mainstream historiographical traditions, they have signalled a crisis in the late medieval intellectual and cultural frameworks. This crisis freed the way for humanists to break through the fossilized and sterile cultural practices of their day, and to propagate a new education, geared to the needs of mankind. These historians of pedagogical thought maintain that Renaissance humanists, for the 'first time,' wrote truly pedagogical works: works that did not solely reflect on the content of studies, but also on the practice of cultivation and education itself, thus introducing the important concept of *Bildung*.¹⁰ This would have been a revolutionary change, amounting to a liberation of mankind. As Günther Böhme, one of the more comprehensive present-day chroniclers of humanist pedagogical thought, formulates: 'Humanismus bedeutet die Entdeckung des Menschen, der sich aus den Fesseln der Dogmatik löst, der die Autorität der Kirche in Frage stellt, ohne freilich deshalb den christlichen Glauben in Frage zu stellen. Humanismus bedeutet die Entdeckung des Menschen, der sich in der Selbstmächtigkeit des Geistes wiederfindet und der mittelalterlichen Eschatologie entsagt. Humanismus bedeutet die Entdeckung jener Wissenschaften, die—als *humaniora*—den Menschen zu sich selbst führen und ihm jene Bildung vermitteln, derer er bedarf, um seiner Würde ebenso wie seiner kritischen Vernunft innezuwerden . . .'¹¹

⁹ ULLMANN, *Medieval Foundations*, 9.

¹⁰ MUSOLF, *Erziehung*, 2–3; KEßLER, 'Die Pädagogik der italienischen Humanisten', 160–180.

¹¹ BÖHME, *Bildungsgeschichte*, 1.

Humanising the medieval period

Cultural historians and cultural critics in general have recognised humanism as the driving force behind the post-medieval civilisation process. Humanism as a programme of education was said to have given us the well-educated citizen, whose *Bildung* is cherished by moralists and political theorists alike as being fundamental to the construction of a viable civil society. It is no coincidence that the apparent loss of humanist *Bildung* in our modern times is deeply deplored in circles of conservative cultural critics. This demise is interpreted as a fundamental loss of individual moral and political stamina, a loss that can destroy society as a whole. In this regard we may refer to the famous lamentations of Allan Bloom and even to the vituperations of Alain Finkielkraut, both of whom take umbrage at the post-modern way of life and the observed slackening in educational standards.¹²

Whereas Renaissance specialists and cultural historians continue to highlight the importance of humanism, its innovative qualities have been subjected to major reinterpretations by several generations of medievalists. These medievalists have challenged the innovative character of the humanist reform project, if only because it relegates the medieval period to the margin. One could, of course, interpret this as a side effect of the professional emancipation of medieval studies in the course of the twentieth century. Interestingly, a major strategy of medievalists with a stake in re-asserting the relevance of the medieval past for western civilisation has been to look for and rediscover humanist elements and the seeds of Renaissance humanism in the Middle Ages. These medievalists have found their inspiration in the important work of outsiders like Norbert Elias, who was one of the first to point out the ways in which humanist pedagogical works stood in a medieval tradition, by tracing the origin of Renaissance civility back to the medieval court society.¹³ These medievalists could also follow the lead of innovative scholars of their own who, like Haskins, assigned humanist and Renaissance concepts of individuality and classicism to the late eleventh and early twelfth century.¹⁴

To put it bluntly, the subtext of all major studies concerning medieval humanisms, whether we are dealing with the late Richard

¹² BLOOM, *Closing*, passim; FINKIELKRAUT, *La défaite*, passim.

¹³ ELIAS, *Über den Prozeß der Zivilisation*.

¹⁴ HASKINS, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century*.

Southern's *magnum opus* on humanist aspects in scholastic culture,¹⁵ the studies of Morris,¹⁶ Benson & Constable,¹⁷ and Ullmann¹⁸ on twelfth-century aestheticism and the discovery of the individual, or with the works of Smalley and McCarthy on classicising mendicants in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries,¹⁹ is that the fundamental humanist innovations concerning human subjectivity, sensitivity, and the internalisation of morals, may be traced back to the medieval period. In other words, they turn the Renaissance and the humanist reform project into a corollary of profoundly medieval phenomena.

It is not difficult to uncover many longstanding medieval traditions that could have furnished the humanist educational reformers of the fifteenth and early sixteenth century with many of their allegedly innovative views. Within the field of behavioural manuals alone, a favourite source corpus for scholars from Norbert Elias onwards, it is relatively easy to point out the humanists' indebtedness to medieval traditions. An interesting attempt in this regard was made by Dilwyn Knox in his 1991 article 'Disciplina. The Monastic and Clerical Origins of European Civility.' Knox built a strong case for the medieval religious background of the secular humanist codes of behaviour as found in the works of Eneas Silvius Piccolomini, Maffeo Vegio, Vitruvio Rossi, Pico della Mirandola, and Erasmus. Contrary to Elias, who regarded late medieval court society as the cradle of modern civil behaviour, Knox reached back to the high medieval monastic tradition, which elaborated the theme of the total correspondence between outer comportment and inner virtue. In his article, he claims that the twelfth- and thirteenth-century Benedictine, Victorine, Franciscan and Dominican novice training manuals and their homiletic counterparts formed the basis of the European civility project. Through their reception in religious and semi-religious communities, and their secular adaptation in princes' mirrors and education manuals, these works would have provided humanist educators such as Erasmus with models of comportment and discipline which they could appropriate and advance in their own humanist *Bildung* project.²⁰ It is altogether clear that the humanists did not willingly acknowledge this debt to medieval tradition. Although they were eager to use medieval

¹⁵ SOUTHERN, *Scholastic Humanism*. See also his *Medieval Humanism*.

¹⁶ MORRIS, *The Discovery*.

¹⁷ *Renaissance and Renewal*, passim.

¹⁸ ULLMANN, *Medieval Foundations*, 78ff.

¹⁹ SMALLEY, *English Friars and Antiquity*; MACCARTHY, *Humanistic Emphases*.

²⁰ KNOX, 'Disciplina', 107–135.

models of comportment and discipline, they refrained from citing medieval authorities, and were careful to take both their examples and their narrative style from classical literature.

In his book *The Envy of Angels*, Stephen Jaeger developed comparable ideas. Yet he did not trace the cradle of civil behaviour and humanist culture back to high medieval monastic models of religious discipline, but to the pedagogical experiments in the high medieval cathedral schools. Between the late tenth and the early twelfth century, the masters of the cathedral schools taught *mores* along with letters by charismatic example. Through the discipline of *mores*, that is the teaching of proper conduct, students of the liberal arts were turned into living works of art: that is to say, balanced, restrained, decorous, and 'well-tempered' human beings, whose outward behaviour reflected their inner virtue. The mode of behaviour cultivated in these high medieval cathedral schools was mainly based on the classical models of Cicero and Seneca, putting eloquence and 'wisdom' (proper *mores*) above rigorous analytical thought. In this context, the dominant liberal arts were grammar and rhetoric rather than logic.²¹

A variety of 'humanist' medieval manuals for the instruction of princes would have owed much to the moral disciplines taught at the eleventh century cathedral school. Likewise, the new genre of courtly romance quickly became a prominent vehicle for espousing comparable ethical ideals. Through their systematisation by several twelfth-century authors, notably John of Salisbury, Gerard of Wales, Thierry of Chartres and Hugh of St. Victor, the educational project of the cathedral schools—with its dual focus on external discipline as the preparation for, or the 'fine-tuning' of the making of inner man, and with the conviction that the well-made body itself became a text-book of virtue and a mirror of the soul's condition—reached the mendicant religious reform movements of the later Middle Ages. Indirectly, these educational concepts thus became an important source for the socio-religious formation of the Christian populace at large, especially through the ubiquitous mendicant preaching effort and the large mendicant production of manuals for moral and religious instruction. In this context, we may point to the influential handbooks and manuals of David of Augsburg, Guibert of Tournai, Vincent of Beauvais, Gil de Zamora, John of Wales, and their observant offspring. Not all of these works had traceable humanist impli-

²¹ JAEGER, *The Envy of Angels*, esp. 5–24, 116ff., 181ff., 233–234.

cations. Indeed, David of Augsburg (like his fellow Franciscan Bernard of Bessa) adopted the popular mirror metaphor of interior and exterior man, but used it to formulate a rather traditional ascetical programme for a life of evangelical perfection, with a strong emphasis on discipline and meditation. The handbooks of Guibert of Tournai, Vincent of Beauvais, and Gil of Zamora, on the other hand, partly written for a slightly different public (notably royal and noble adolescents), did include more humanist attempts at creating balanced, restrained, decorous, and 'well-tempered' human beings.

Assessing the humanist rhetoric of innovation

There is no need to challenge such medievalist views concerning the humanist character of educational and moral reform projects throughout the medieval period. In broad outline, these medievalists have a reasonably strong case. Their view that many core elements of humanist pedagogy were rooted in longstanding medieval traditions is probably correct. This is not simply the case in issues of compartment, but also holds true for the humanist emphasis on classical literature and moral philosophy. From the late tenth century onwards, we come across many educators and intellectuals who to some extent acknowledged the importance of the classical legacy and who used the ethical works of Aristotle, Seneca and Cicero for their own (proto-) humanist educational stance. Comparable developments may be traced in later medieval poetics.²²

Yet, whatever the classicising influences in later medieval thought and learning, the official late medieval school curriculum was definitely not humanistically inclined. The late Paul Oskar Kristeller who, more than most Renaissance scholars, acknowledged the medieval background of humanist endeavours, remarked: 'If it is true that the Renaissance in many of its aspects may be linked with medieval precedents (. . .) it is equally true that these medieval phenomena which seem to foreshadow certain Renaissance developments did not necessarily occupy the centre of stage during their own period . . .'²³

²² GREENFIELD, *Humanist and Scholastic Poetics*. The author interprets humanist poetics partly as a continuation of patristic and pre-scholastic exegesis, and partly as a continuation of medieval Platonic traditions, with an additional indebtedness to the medieval Italian *ars aregandi* and *ars dictaminis* tradition. See also WITT, *Italian Humanism*.

²³ KRISTELLER, *Renaissance Thought*, 108.

Last but not least, a complete conflation of the humanist endeavour with that of its medieval precedents might not help to explain the fundamental differences in style, tone and examples found in the humanist pedagogical treatises of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

It is possible to put much of the humanist rhetoric of novelty down as a deliberate attempt by self-posing humanist educators to carve out their own niche in the realm of education and to gain a foothold in the traditional bastions of higher learning. Erasmus knew that he was exaggerating when he complained about the worthless theological literary production of his times, in opposition to which he presented his own pedagogical and catechistic works as conveying something totally new. He deliberately kept silent about a host of existing medieval works of which he must have had first-hand knowledge. Moreover, he made ample use of age-old stereotypical criticisms of scholastic practice. Erasmus' works are filled with bitter complaints about unlettered and ignorant scholastic educators, whose barbaric language and predilection for ridiculous distinctions and scholastic subtleties killed the true spirit of learning. In a letter of August 1497, when studying theology at Paris, Erasmus told a friend of his exposure to the dream world of Scotism, a world from which he was afraid he would not wake up again.²⁴ In the *In Praise of Folly*,²⁵ in many letters,²⁶ and again in the *Enchiridion*²⁷ he exposed the 'subtleties' of Scotism *as pars pro toto* for scholasticism as such, in much the same way as the ex-Franciscan and fellow humanist critic François Rabelais later was to scorn the academic *Barbouillamenta Scoti*.²⁸

At a closer look, we see that humanist ridicule of scholastic thought and learning echoed centuries of criticism of overly refined scholas-

²⁴ Letter 64 to Thomas Grey. In my numbering of Erasmus' letters, I follow ALLEN, *Opus Epistolarum*. Erasmus tells Gray that he, Erasmus, has plunged into the dreamworld of Scotus, a world from which he is afraid he will not be able to wake up again—just like Epimenides, a famous theologian of old, who fell asleep while he was thinking about quiddities and formal distinctions, and slept a theological sleep of 47 years. But at least, Epimenides was lucky to wake up at all, and Erasmus fears that the Scotists of his day will not. Erasmus abhors their barbaric language and their narrow intelligence, their inaccessible teachings, their haughty manners and their hypocrisy.

²⁵ 'Jam has subtilissimas subtilitates subtiliores etiam reddunt tot Scholasticorum viae, ut citius e labyrinthis temet explices, quam ex involucris Realium, Nominalium, Thomistarum, Albertistarum, Occamistarum, Scotistarum, et nondum omnes divi sectas, sed praecipuas dumtaxat.' Cited from HALKIN, 'Duns Scot et Érasme', 91.

²⁶ See for instance his 1519 letter to Josse Jonas (Letter 985).

²⁷ HALKIN, 'Duns Scotus et Érasme', 92–93.

²⁸ RABELAIS, *Oeuvres*, 241.

tic theology and of the use of Aristotelian philosophical categories in theological discussions, even by theologians who did not have profound humanist inclinations.²⁹ Within the Franciscan movement alone, we may for instance refer to the complaints of Bonaventure (d. 1274), Peter John Olivi (d. 1298), and the Franciscan humanist Francesco Michele del Padovano (fl. c. 1460).³⁰ Just like these and other critical predecessors, fifteenth- and sixteenth-century humanists found fault with the verbal technicality of scholasticism, with its heavy emphasis on logic and 'Aristotelian' philosophical subtleties. Moreover, in line with these older critics, humanists like Erasmus countered the demonstrative theology of scholasticism with a more intuitive method, a homiletic art of persuasion, and an affective practice of religious piety.³¹ Notwithstanding Erasmus' own linguistic innovations (such as in his *Novum Instrumentum*), which went beyond the theological outlook of many prior critics of scholasticism, a few fundamental similarities between the positions taken up by these earlier dissenting voices and by Erasmus are clearly visible: similarities in theological style, and even in actual content (in relation to a shared focus on *christoformitas*, affective piety, the primacy of love and will over intellect, and the ultimate dignity of man).³²

Hence, humanists drew on a large existing archive of scholasticism-bashing. Like good rhetoricians, they made use, so to speak, of accepted *loci communes* that could help them drive their rhetorical message home. When German humanists like Conrad Celtis, Rudolf Agricola, Jacob Wimpfeling, and the notorious Jacob Locher complained of the educational practices and objectives of their day, in the hope of asserting their own importance in the field of education, they took up a very recognisable rhetorical stance, a stance going back even further than the epideictic oratory used by Petrarch in his attack on

²⁹ HALKIN, 'Duns Scot et Érasme', 101–103. Erasmus has the same criticism of the subtle theologians as did Jean Gerson and older, medieval critics of scholastic theology before him.

³⁰ Known for his diatribes against (Scotist) scholasticism in the schools of his time: 'Nam haec vulgaris ac perturbata apud nos theologorum schola, solis quidditatibus, formalitatibus et hecceitatibus plurimum vel frequenter insistit . . .' PRATESI, 'Discorsi', 89f.

³¹ HALKIN, 'Duns Scot et Érasme', 104–105: 'A la philosophie démonstrative de Duns Scot et à l'enchaînement de propositions abstraites, Érasme oppose un méthode intuitive, un véritable art de persuader (. . .) une pratique de l'affectivité (. . .)'

³² HALKIN, 'Duns Scot et Érasme', 105–109. In content, if not in style, even Duns Scotus' theology itself in many ways was closer to that of Erasmus than the latter was willing to acknowledge.

scholastic medicine and theology in the 1360s.³³ Especially in the later fifteenth and early sixteenth century, the humanist-scholastic debate evolved into interfaculty feuding, with both humanists and their scholastic opponents reverting to the production of specific *apologiae*. The humanist apologists in particular were fierce in their denunciation of their (still very dominant and successful) opponents, whom they compared with beasts, pigs and sows.³⁴

But with all its exaggerations, the humanist rhetoric of innovation cannot be dismissed as simply being bereft of meaning. The humanists did not just ridicule scholastic excesses—as had been done by many before them—but in essence found fault with the scholastic curriculum as such, first of all in the field of the liberal arts, but increasingly in the fields of theology and medicine as well. This curricular criticism was bound up with sincere doubts about the dominant methods of instruction in the schools, which were based on the scholastic hermeneutics of analytic reading and disputation.

The ‘textual community’ of the schools and universities, which at the arts faculty level was predominantly shaped by Aristotelian logic and natural philosophy, and which in the theology faculties was built around the Sentences of Lombard, thrived on what Carol Everhart Quillen has called a ‘culture of excerpt-driven debate.’ Its participants shared common source materials, a common set of definitions and problems, and a common method of discursive practice. Logic, natural philosophy, theology, as well as the other disciplines (such as law and medicine) were taught by means of systematically organised handbooks and commentaries. The acknowledged authoritative excerpts incorporated in these works provided the starting-point for further reading (often in *florilegia* and *summae*), predominantly insofar as the pursuit of this could furnish arguments for scholastic questions and facilitate academic debate, the terms of which were very much shaped by the logical categories and the questions put forward in the textbooks and commentaries themselves. It was often deemed unnecessary to read original works as a whole. Hence, the scholastic reading process was not directed at appropriating the original text, but at obtaining arguments for further scholarly debate.³⁵

³³ A nice survey is given by RUMMEL, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate*, 3–5.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, 5. She expressly mentions the diatribes by Jacob Locher, Wilhelm Nesen, Johann Reuchlin, and Ulrich von Hutten.

³⁵ QUILLEN, *Rereading the Renaissance*, 150–154.

This scholastic world of learning had itself emerged in reaction to the more monastic and 'humanist' pedagogical practices of the eleventh and early twelfth century, which had cherished different hermeneutics of reading and had exhibited other attitudes to the text and the performative aspects of teaching.³⁶ Stephen Jaeger therefore signals almost diametrically opposed developments in the scholastic transformations in the twelfth century and in the transformation from the later Middle Ages to the Renaissance. Whereas twelfth-century philosophy and theology moved away from the monastic reading experience and from the cathedral-school reading models towards far more rigorous and analytical forms of (excerpt-driven) knowledge, clothed in Aristotelian logical categories, the Renaissance showed, as it were, a 'return' of rhetorical charismatic culture, especially at those junctures where Renaissance humanism confronted the 'barrenness' of late medieval scholasticism.

One could argue that, by the later fourteenth century, scholasticism had not only fully established itself, but in some fields was reaching its limits.³⁷ To its opponents, it seemed overly theoretical and inept in its scientific claims. Not surprisingly, it was severely criticised by many, not in the least by conservative theologians and more pastorally oriented religious scholars, many of whom found fault with the more radical consequences of the scholastic method in the fields of theology and metaphysics. It is no coincidence that several areas in later fourteenth- and fifteenth-century theology saw a movement away from the celebrated scholastic issues, towards more practically and pastorally oriented forms of civil and religious learning. This development may be seen, for instance, in the theological re-orientation of Jean Gerson (chancellor of Paris University), the practical theology professed by the scholars of the so-called Vienna circle, and in the overt rejection of scholastic learning by spokesmen of the various observant movements.

Early humanists, like Petrarch, had voiced comparable concerns. Charles Trinkaus aptly remarked that Petrarch's humanism '... was also partly a response to the sense of a gap between the current

³⁶ For the monastic reading experience, see LECLERCQ's classic *L'amour des lettres et le désir de Dieu*.

³⁷ This does not mean that scholasticism as such was suffering a crisis. Throughout the fifteenth century and even thereafter, scholastic philosophy and theology proved to be a dynamic force, fully capable of supporting innovative strands of thought. On this subject see, for instance FUNKENSTEIN, *Theology and the Scientific Imagination*.

doctrines and practices of Christianity, and the experience of urban life. Petrarch's criticism of contemporary Aristotelians (. . .) was essentially moral and not intellectual. (. . .) It was the failure of the university-trained professionals of his day, whether lawyers, physicians or theologians, to be aware of the crying moral problems he sensed in his contemporaries or to be aware of the irrelevance of their studies for those problems which they sometimes sought too easily to solve.³⁸

Yet the humanists were on the whole more radical than other critics of excessive scholasticism. In his numerous educational writings,³⁹ Petrarch did not so much doubt the validity of specific pieces of scholastic knowledge, as dismiss both the established hierarchy of disciplines and methods, and the dominant hermeneutics of scholastic reading, proposing an altogether alternative discursive practice of study, in which the old disciplinary boundaries lost much of their significance.⁴⁰ With recourse to classical rhetoric and Augustinian exegetical and hermeneutic principles (as put forward in *De Doctrina Christiana*), Petrarch developed a new view on scholarship. For him, proper scholarship was based on grammar and rhetoric rather than on the exploitation of logical categories current in the arts faculties and the higher faculties of law, medicine and theology. He also maintained that a thorough acquaintance with the rhetorical and poetical genres—ranging from the Bible, the writings of the Church fathers, the classical rhetorical and historical legacy, to poetry as such—would provide a far more satisfactory basis for the acquisition of true wisdom than the existing handbooks, commentaries and *florilegia* on logic, natural philosophy and theology used for the education of students.

We could say that the pedagogical aim of this humanist stance was to facilitate new practices of reading, writing and representation that would allow man to obtain true wisdom and proper virtue, and could help him to participate in civil society.⁴¹ The *studia litterarum*—that is the study of grammar, rhetoric and a full acquaintance with the literary *Nachlaß* of Antiquity (works of poetry, history, and (moral) philosophy)—was to facilitate the expression of man's natural humanity. Lino Coluccio di Piero Salutati (1331–1406), Leonardo Bruni, and

³⁸ TRINKAUS, *In Our Image and Likeness* I, 18–19.

³⁹ Among which we might single out his *De Sui Ipsius et Multorum Ignorantia*, *Fr. Petro Gilberto Grammatico Parmensi*, *In Quatuor Libros Invektivarum in Medicum Obiurgantem*, *Ad Quendam Doctum Adolescentem et Eloquentem*, and *De Otio Religiosorum*.

⁴⁰ MÜLLER, *Bildung und Erziehung*, 2–4.

⁴¹ QUILLEN, *Rereading the Renaissance*, 15.

Battista Guarino therefore maintained that learning was not an accumulation of specialist knowledge in different disciplines, addressing theoretical problems that only had meaning in the discourse of these respective disciplines, but that it should shape the life of man as a whole, contributing to the wisdom and the virtue of all citizens, and that it was therefore paramount for the enhancement of the common good. Hence, the *studia litterarum* had to evolve into the *studia humanitatis*.⁴²

Petrarch and others thus not only changed the subject matter of what they regarded as true scholarship, but also changed the strategies of reading and writing that shaped the disciplines. One may ask again to what extent this humanist approach to study and learning could have reached back to pre-scholastic or non-scholastic medieval conceptions. As said in the above, the humanist scorn of the excerpt-driven culture of reading and debate fashionable at the universities shared many characteristics with anti-scholastic criticism prior to the Renaissance. Medieval culture also had provided some feasible hermeneutic alternatives to hard-core scholasticism. There were manifold monastic and mendicant meditative (as well as ruminative, contemplative, and mystical) reading models that entailed a full immersion in the original texts instead of a reading of excerpts. There also existed various kinds of exegetical hermeneutics that went far beyond the *quaestio* format, and themselves reached back to patristic and pre-scholastic forms of reading.⁴³

Yet the scholastic reading model, which gave pride of place to the reading of authoritative fragments and confronted authorities by means of a fundamentally logical toolkit, had been instrumental in shaping the form and content of the various later medieval school disciplines. Whatever the humanists' possible indebtedness to older, non-scholastic medieval conceptions of reading and writing, it still holds true that their challenge to scholasticism cut at the core of the prevailing teaching practices.

⁴² MÜLLER, *Bildung und Erziehung*, 31–33, 233; NAUERT, 'Humanism as Method', 427–438. Battista GUARINO's *De Ordine Docendi et Studendi* (1459) sees grammar as the foundational discipline: providing students both with a full grasp of the rules of speech and writing in Latin and Greek and with a thorough familiarity with classical Greek and Latin prose and poetry. On this foundation (following Cicero and Quintilian), a proper training in rhetoric, dialectic and moral philosophy had to take place (by reading the *Ethics* of Aristotle, as well as Plato's and Cicero's dialogues). Together, these disciplines constituted the *studia humanitatis*, aiding man to lead the virtuous life proper to his nature. GUARINO, *De Ordine Docendi et Studendi*, 159–178.

⁴³ For the latter I can, for instance, refer to Bonaventura da Bagnoreggio's exegetical hermeneutics as unfolded in his *Breviloquium*.

Hence, we cannot explain all the central issues by admitting that many humanist educational concepts and ideals had their prototypes in treatises of medieval forerunners, and that many humanists tried to keep silent about these prototypes, because acknowledging them would not have suited their purposes. After all, their aim was to denounce existing traditions and they had a political interest in heralding their own innovative stance as a heroic battle against the scholastic 'forces of barbarism.' There might be more to the humanist rhetoric of innovation. The humanist presentation of educational concepts, the humanist recourse to a different set of authoritative texts and genres to underscore them, the scope of the humanists' intended public, the ways in which they tried to reach this public, and last but not least the humanist curricular and pedagogical choices to safeguard a proper and encompassing *Bildung* seem to surpass earlier reform projects.

Humanist pedagogical spokesmen changed the notion of what seemed relevant for proper education. This first became apparent in the writings of Petrarch, whose humanist programme for the pursuit of wisdom created a new discursive practice and provided the outlines of new genres which had no parallel in the medieval tradition.⁴⁴ Behind the manifold changes advocated by subsequent humanist educators lay a sharpened sense of the holistic character of education. Overall, the medieval pedagogical tradition, whatever its sometimes impressive encyclopaedic scope, had strong hierarchical and even reductionist connotations. We can also discern this in the novice training treatises mentioned in the above, which like their humanist successors emphasised the correspondence between exterior and interior man, and at times acknowledged the importance of a good general education. In the last instance, however, interior man had preference. Whatever the emphasis on comportment and bodily discipline, the cultivation of exterior man always remained a means to an end: an end beyond the edification of man himself. Likewise, the large educational treatises of the later medieval period, such as the gigantic (*E*)*Rudimentum Doctrinae* of Guibert of Tournai (which exhibits a fully encyclopaedic educational vision and which shows strong proto-humanist features in its attention for rhetoric, its insight in the poetic nature of the biblical text, and in its use of classical authors), still display a definite hierarchy. In this hierarchy, the liberal arts remain handmaidens to a higher cause, and the intrinsic

⁴⁴ QUILLEN, *Rereading the Renaissance*, 14.

sic value of language and literature for the formation of man does not receive the same emphasis as in later humanist works.⁴⁵ Moreover, these medieval proto-humanist texts did not fundamentally challenge the basic methods within the various disciplines.

In the humanist tradition, particularly in its exemplification in the works of Vergerio, Erasmus, Vives (1492–1540), and Melancthon (1497–1560), the disciplinary hierarchy is not always openly challenged, yet becomes far more implicit. Moreover, the whole educational project increasingly focuses on the concrete individual as a whole. It is the dignity, and for some humanists the glorification of individual man as a composite being of body and soul that as a whole is the necessary object of education.⁴⁶ External comportment and aesthetic refinement no longer refer in a straightforward manner to true inner virtue and piety (as man's true essence), but are envisaged to constitute integral aspects of man's proper self. There is a strong sense that the individual cannot derive his essence from a hierarchical finality or from a predetermined God-given harmony. The individual must create his own essential value from himself, by developing his inherent qualities to the full by immersing himself in the *studia humanitatis*.⁴⁷

The *studia humanitatis* embraced the study of grammar, rhetoric, oratory, poetry, history, and moral philosophy, and implied that a

⁴⁵ The (*E*)*rudimentum Doctrinae* (1259–68) deals in four parts (with recourse to the Aristotelian doctrine of the four causes) with the final cause of learning, the efficient cause of learning, the formal cause of learning, and the material cause of learning. Pedagogical issues are mostly dealt with in the third treatise, which was also published separately as *De Modo Addiscendi*. The fourth treatise on the material cause of learning contains an interesting catalogue of disciplines, which Guibert lists in four *quadrivina*. For him, the basis of all formal education is formed by a *quadrivium eloquentiae*, consisting of grammar, poetics, dialectic and rhetoric. This basic *quadrivium* of language, which is far more 'humanist' than the traditional *trivium* of grammar, rhetoric and logic found in many contemporary works, is followed by a *quadrivium intelligentiae* (consisting of arithmetic, music, geometry, and astronomy, the sciences that allow for a proper demonstration *propter quid* in the Aristotelian sense), a *quadrivium experientiae* or *activae* (consisting of physics, ethics, magic, and mechanics), and finally a *quadrivium sapientiae* or *activae* (consisting of hagiography, biblical prophecy, and evangelical and apostolic doctrines). It would seem that the final *quadrivium* is particularly reserved for students in their *status perfectionis*. For more information, see: GIEBEN, 'Il 'Rudimentum Doctrinae', 621ff.; ROEST, 'Scientia and Sapientia', 164–179.

⁴⁶ Most optimistic are the opinions of Ficino and especially those of Pico della Mirandola, who in his *Oratio de Dignitate Hominis* and again in his *Heptaplus* stressed man's freedom to choose his own nature.

⁴⁷ This has been said to be the essence of Vives' educational project. Cf. BÖHME, *Bildungsgeschichte*, 150.

full knowledge of the classics was a prerequisite for man's moral development. The *studia humanitatis* were said not just to train one of the rational capacities of intellect, as scholastic education did with its heavy emphasis on logic, but also to stir the emotions and command the will, thus addressing all the higher faculties of the human soul in a balanced fashion. In this holistic view of man and his proper education, language acquisition, writing, and speech lose their auxiliary character as a means of communication. Their cultivation now becomes the expression of man's civility.

This ties in with an enhanced interest in motivational aspects of study. At a closer look, it would seem that humanist pedagogical treatises, whether focussing on comportment and civility of the young or on the *ratio studendi*, paid more attention to motivational aspects than had been customary before. To be sure, for those willing to see, parallels can be found with predominantly Franciscan and Augustinian voluntarist tenets dating from earlier periods, which had found expression in forms of affective piety and in a 'Frömmigkeits-theologie' that in its turn shaped the religious outlook of important humanists, like Erasmus (notwithstanding his diatribes against the Friars Minor).⁴⁸ Yet, before the humanist pedagogical transformation, the motivational aspects of study had not been systematically exploited for use in the classroom. Likewise, the school curriculum at medieval mendicant schools and arts faculties, where boys from c. 14 years onwards received their education in the liberal arts, had not embraced the *studia humanitatis*. In many ways, the active pursuit of rhetoric, history and poetry during the later medieval period had been impressive, especially in Italy, but it had predominantly remained an extra-curricular affair. The school curriculum itself was principally concerned with logic and natural philosophy, whether or not as prolegomena to doctrinal theology, law, and medicine.

Proto-humanist curricular developments

Throughout the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, there had been partial reform attempts. In some centres of learning, we see a gradual insertion of rhetoric and poetry into the arts curriculum, as well as the introduction of a more literature-oriented moral philos-

⁴⁸ See my forthcoming article 'Expectamus Regnum Franciscanum' in the 2004 issue of *Collectanea Franciscana*.

ophy. This certainly was the case in the more prominent Latin schools on the Italian peninsula.⁴⁹ Likewise, from the mid-fourteenth century onwards, several Augustinian, Dominican, and Franciscan non-degree *studia* in Florence and other Tuscan and Umbrian towns started to appoint *lectores ad lecturam Dantis*, and to increase attention towards the moral writings of Cicero and Seneca.⁵⁰

In these schools, which did not have to comply with the degree requirements of arts faculties (the curricula of which frequently echoed those of Paris), there was considerable leeway as regards the inclusion of non-scholastic and proto-humanist curricular elements. Teachers at these non-degree schools aimed at teaching their pupils to become efficacious homiletic practitioners. This alone provided ample motivation to put considerable emphasis on rhetorical, emblematical and exemplary historical issues. This educational pragmatism, as well as the close social contacts between mendicant teachers and civic humanists in Italian towns, who at that time began to exert their influence on the Italian urban schools, facilitated a relatively open attitude to several humanist curricular wishes.⁵¹

P.O. Kristeller and K. Elm not only highlight the many contacts between Italian mendicant and humanist circles throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (which may partly be explained by the fact that the mendicant orders predominantly drew from the social stratum that also produced the leading urban intellectuals).⁵² Kristeller

⁴⁹ Cf. BLACK, *Humanism and Education*, passim.

⁵⁰ Several renowned observant and non-observant Franciscan preachers made abundant use of the works of Dante (and to some extent of the works of Jacopo da Todi) in their sermons. But they also devoted separate commentaries to the *Comedia*. MARETO, 'Bibliografia Dantesco-Francescana', 13-14; GHINATO, 'La predicazione francescana', 62. In 1395, we come across Giovanni Bertoldi da Serravalle, lector at the non-observant *studium* of St. Croce; he translated Dante's *Comedia* and wrote commentaries on the work. See LOMBARDI, *Vita e opere*. In the fifteenth century, we find Antonio di Arezzo as a university teacher *ad lecturam Dantis* (1432). PIANA, *La Facoltà Teologica*, 86, 249.

⁵¹ Fourteenth- and fifteenth-century conventual Franciscans, such as friar Illuminato, Tedaldo della Casa, Antonio d'Arezzo, Francesco Michele del Padovano, and Bernardino de Barduccis maintained close relations with local humanists. DAVIS, 'Education in Dante's Florence', 415-435; MATTESINI, 'La biblioteca di S. Croce', 254-316. Francesco Michele del Padovano is known for his diatribes against (Scotist) scholasticism in the schools of his time: 'Nam haec vulgaris ac perturbata apud nos theologorum schola, solis quidditatibus, formalitatibus et hecceitatibus plurimum vel frequenter insisit . . .' PRATESI, 'Discorsi e nuove lettere', 90. Cf. PIANA, *La Facoltà Teologica*, 263. See on the prolific literary production of the humanist Friar Minor Antonio da Rho also RUTHERFORD, 'A Finding List', 75-108.

⁵² '... die Männerklöster von S. Croce, S. Maria Novella, S. Spirito, S. Maria Annunziata und S. Maria del Carmine (...) in erster Linie Spiegelbilder der in

and Elm also estimate that more than 50% of the 200 known 'religious humanists' in Italy during the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries were mendicant friars,⁵³ therewith belying the proverbial antagonism between mendicant scholarship and humanist learning that we so frequently encounter in the writings of Erasmus *cum suis*.⁵⁴

Particularly within observant circles, which harboured important critics of academic scholasticism in the fields of teaching and preaching, notions of pedagogical reform were put forward that resembled the educational ideas of contemporary civic humanists. The observants were very keen to arrive at a more civil-oriented homiletic rhetoric, in reaction to the scholastic models put forward in the academic *artes praedicandi*. It has been observed that the 'humanist' homiletic strategies found in the works of observant preachers (with their abundant use of similes, metaphors and historical examples), as well as the amazing erudition (not simply in the fields of biblical study and canon law, but also in the fields of Latin and Greek patristics and classical literature), and the elegant rhetorical expression of some observant preachers,⁵⁵ drew the attention of contemporary humanists, like Guarino and Maffeo Vegio (1406–1458).⁵⁶

Moreover, the topic of civic education as a *sine qua non* for the religious reform of society, a theme in several pedagogical treatises of Italian humanists of the Quattrocento, was very much at the core

ihrer unmittelbaren Umgebung wohnenden politischen, sozialen und kulturellen Führungsschicht waren.' ELM, 'Mendikanten und Humanisten', 69.

⁵³ The Augustinian order was by far the most open towards new humanist ideals. Among the various Franciscan groups the situation was slightly more ambivalent. In Florence in particular there were long-time contacts between mendicant houses and local humanists. While the Dominicans and the Augustinian Hermits took the lead, the Franciscans also succumbed to classicising influences from the late thirteenth/early fourteenth century onwards. KRISTELLER, 'The Contribution of Religious Orders', 1–54; ELM, 'Mendikanten und Humanisten' 62–63. It shows in the presence of works by Virgil, Servius, Solinus, Eutropius, Suetonius, Horace and Ovid in the St. Croce library in Florence. Roughly at the same time, comparable developments took place among the English Franciscans. Cf. SMALLEY, *English Friars and Antiquity*, passim.

⁵⁴ See on this DIPPLE, *Antifraternalism and Anticlericalism*, passim, as well as my forthcoming article 'Expectamus Regnum Franciscanum: Erasmus and his Seraphic Obsession.'

⁵⁵ Among observant preachers who had a certain taste for a refined Latin and Italian style we count Bernardino da Siena, Alberto da Sarteano, Roberto da Lecce, and Gabriele Rangoni. GHINATO, 'La predicazione francescana', 24–98; GHINATO, 'Umanisti e francescani', 184–193, 239–245; MUGNAINI, 'S. Bernardino da Siena e l'Umanesimo', 3–11; CENCI, 'Nicolò Montano, frate e grammatico', 145–161.

⁵⁶ On the influence of Bernardino da Siena on Vegio, author of *De Educatione Liberorum et Eorum Claribus Moribus*, see MÜLLER, *Bildung und Erziehung*, 39.

of the observant reform project. A case in point are the activities of Bernardino of Siena. He established places of learning in observant friaries to teach his fellow friars, in addition to dealing with the character of study as an intrinsic part of Christian life. In a sermon given in Florence on 20 February 1425, in a quadragesimal sermon delivered in Siena that same year, and again in his long *Sermo de Scientiarum Studiis* given before the university of Padua in 1443, Bernardino elaborated the importance of study as a vehicle to arrive at true wisdom for all people.⁵⁷

These sermons pointed out the importance of study as a moral undertaking and as a moral imperative in the life of every Christian, identifying as core elements the students' mental disposition, their discipline, and their acquisition of proper knowledge. Those who sought science with a good disposition would reap divine gifts (gifts of the Spirit), whereas the ignorant were like beasts who indulged in the gifts of the body. Ignorance, which enticed man to indulge in the latter, just as Adam's ignorance had led him to the fall, was at the bottom of social unrest and social-economic disaster. Hence, study was a necessity. Interestingly, these adhortations were not only addressed at students, clerics, and laymen (in all strata of society), but also at women (married women, their daughters, as well as elderly spinsters). For every Christian, study was a moral undertaking beneficial to himself, to his family, his friends, and to the community at large. It would direct secular and religious people towards moral virtue. Study, therefore, was honourable and honest. But more than that, it represented a glory. In a humanist vein, Bernardino da Siena emphasised that study would make man fully human, and would enable him to lead a civil and pious life.⁵⁸ On a more concrete level, Bernardino

⁵⁷ PORZI, *Umanesimo e francescanesimo*, 127–136; PAGETTI, 'La necessità dello studio', 310–321; MECACCI, 'L'educazione cristiana', 21–50, 90ff.; ELM, 'Die Franziskanerobservanz als Bildungsreform', 210–211.

⁵⁸ 'Io vivoglio fare diventare tutti predicatori e voi donne predicatrici.' Cf. BERNARDINO DA SIENA, *Le prediche volgari inedite*, 205–214. The right knowledge would enable all Christians to understand, and hence to embrace their own proper virtues and obligations. The outcome would be a fully 'Christian' society. Cf. ELM, 'Die Franziskanerobservanz als Bildungsreform', 211: 'Das durch Bildung erstrebte Ideal, die Keuschheit der Jungfrauen, die Zucht der Jünglinge, die gegenseitige Hochschätzung der Ehepartner, die Achtung der Kinder vor ihren Eltern, die Verantwortung der Eltern für ihre Kinder, die gegenseitige Unterstützung der Bürger, die Gerechtigkeit der Kaufleute, die Zuverlässigkeit der Handwerker, der Gehorsamkeit der Untertanen, die Fürsorge der Herrscher, die Verantwortung aller vor Gott, stellt einen Kanon von Pflichten und Tugenden dar, der wie kaum ein anderer das Bild des wahren Christen und rechten Bürgers widerspiegelt.'

dealt with the prerequisites of learning, and its accompanying rules. This is most striking in his sermon *Pro Scholaribus Septem Disciplinae*, in which he, in analogy to the then popular treatises on the seven liberal arts and the seven virtues, presented seven disciplinary conditions for scholarly progress.⁵⁹

Giovanni da Capistrano, his observant disciple and colleague, also developed a programme of educational reform. In this regard we may point to his *Sermones Duo ad Studentes* (1440), which were probably given before the theology students of Monteripido in Perugia. In these sermons, Giovanni da Capistrano insisted on a proper grounding in the science of Sacred Scripture (*ut se regere sciant et docere quos regunt*), the arts of the *trivium* or the humanist sciences (*ut sciant discernere verum a falso et habere aditum ad scientiam pietatis*), and all those practical sciences (*scientiae saecularium artium industrialium*) necessary to govern the household and the state.⁶⁰ In a letter dating from February 1444, Giovanni da Capistrano furthermore made it clear that the

⁵⁹ BERNARDINO DA SIENA, *Pro Scholaribus Septem Disciplinae*, 406–408: ‘1a est extimatio//Apoc. 21, 6: Ego sitiienti dabo de fonte aque vite gratis// Impossibile enim est pervenire ad perfectionem cuiusque studii et scientie, nisi ante precedat magna extimatio altitudinis eius (. . .); 2a est separatio, scilicet ab omni distractivo extrinseco, sicut:—A mala societate et vaga illorum qui non diligunt studium (. . .)—A mala vita (. . .)—A disputationibus in festis (. . .)—A vestibis vanis et pretiosis—Ab impossibilibus, sicut de quibusdam characteribus et arte notoria (. . .)—Ab erroribus Averrois etc.—A ludis taxillorum etc.—A furando gallinas etc.—A studiis noxiis (. . .)—Ab ignorantibus doctoribus (. . .); 3a est quietatio, scilicet mentis et spiritus (. . .); 4a ordinatio, scilicet de priori non faciat posterius, sicut potest fieri etc. Hic autem ordo attendi debet:—1° in corporalibus. Videlicet in commedendo nec magis nec minus (. . .)—2° in temporalibus. Oportet enim mentem abstrahere ab occupatione negotiorum, imaginatione sensibilibus, vagatione corporum (. . .)—3° in spiritualibus, scilicet timendo Deum (. . .); 5a continuatio et assiduitas (. . .); 6a delectatio. In corporalibus enim cibus disconveniens non bene incorporatur, nisi aliqua interveniat complacentia per ruminationem et saporem. Sic scientia et Scriptura:—1° oportet eam sumere audiendo vel legendo.—2° repetendo masticare (. . .) 3° incorporari . . .—Et 4° fit anime cibus (. . .); 7a commensuratio sive discretio. In qua magna sollicitudo esse debet et animadversio in quatuor, scilicet ut consideret: 1° suum statum; 2° suam etatem vel tempus; 3° suum ingenium; 4° suum desiderium (. . .).’ The source apparatus makes clear that Bernardino is heavily indebted to the *Decretum* and to Franciscan authors like Alexander of Hales (*Summa Theologica*), Bonaventura da Bagnoregio (*Collationes in Hexaëmeron*), Alvaro Pelayo (*De Placitu Ecclesiae*), and Gilbert de Tournai (*Sermones ad Status*). Moreover, Bernardino concludes with commending his audience to read Hugh of St. Victor’s *Didascalicon*, and to keep in mind the words of Salomon (Prov. 11,2): ‘Ubi fuerit superbia, ibi erit et contumelia; ubi autem humilitas, ibi et sapientia.’ Cf. MECACCI, ‘L’educazione cristiana’, 106–113.

⁶⁰ The latter *scientiae saecularium artium industrialium* are a mixture of ethics, economics and common sense. See GIOVANNI DA CAPISTRANO, *Sermones Duo ad Studentes*, in particular 116f.

acquisition of knowledge was not simply necessary for the tasks at hand, but was fully in line with man's proper sapiential nature, a concept that was to be echoed in the pedagogical writings of Pico della Mirandola, Erasmus and Juan Luis Vives. According to Giovanni da Capistrano, those who despised learning sinned against human nature itself, as well as against the gifts of the Holy Spirit.⁶¹

The observants' interest in new homiletic strategies; their concern with an overhaul of civil education and with a new learning of piety (not overly burdened with scholastic distinctions), which we furthermore find in the writings of the observant friar Antonio da Rho,⁶² may be interpreted as a sign that fifteenth-century observant Franciscans and contemporary humanists to a large extent shared a comparable outlook with regard to the moral implications of study.

Yet, Bernardino da Siena's and Giovanni da Capistrano's major sources of inspiration were the medieval educational works of the Victorines and their thirteenth-century reworkings in mendicant circles. With Antonio da Rho and the conventual friar Lorenzo Guglielmo Traversagni as notable exceptions, they did not envisage a wholesale desertion of medieval authorities in favour of classical models. Neither did they envisage fundamental changes in the actual content of the individual disciplines; changes that would reshape the medieval *artes liberales* into the humanist disciplines of the *studia humanitatis*.

The innovative character of humanist reform

In its reorientation to classical literary and philosophical authorities, its outright dismissal of most medieval handbooks, and in its complete reshuffling of the disciplines of grammar, rhetoric and dialectics, the unfolding humanist programme appears to be more radical than anything envisaged by the observant spokesmen mentioned above. Eventually, the humanist educational programme offered a full-blown alternative to the teachings in the schools. From the second

⁶¹ Cf. GIOVANNI DA CAPISTRANO, *Sermones Duo ad Studentes*, esp. 127ff. After 1446, when the papal bull *Ultra Sacra* made the observants more or less independent of the Franciscan order as a whole, the conventuals made use of existing discontent among observant friars concerning the pursuit of studies, by offering lay friars the chance of getting ordained, and promising young priests further advancement should they return to the conventual fold.

⁶² See for instance his *Exhortatio ad Scholares* (1430–31) and his *Oratio ad Scholares* (1431–1436), in ANTONIO DA RHO, *Apologia-Orazioni*, 122–126, 128–143.

half of the fifteenth century onwards, this humanist programme was beginning to make its way into the official curricula; not solely at some of the Latin schools in the major urban centres (both in Italy and to the north of the Alps), but even, albeit at a slower rate, at the arts and theology faculties of many newly established universities.

This humanist re-thinking of education was not always progressive in the modern sense of the word. This may be illustrated by means of Rudolf Agricola's letter *De Formando Studio*, dated 1484. This letter, addressed to Agricola's friend Barbirianus, sketches an outline of a proverbial humanist educational programme, comparable to that of the Italian humanists mentioned before. After denouncing the entire medieval educational curriculum out of hand (with its logical subtleties and dilemmas), Agricola presents a vision of true learning, the core elements of which are i.) moral philosophy, ii.) a veritable *rerum cognitio*, or a rejuvenated liberal arts course (centring on language and philology, but also paying attention to geography and natural philosophy), and iii.) a humanist *ars commode eloqui*.⁶³ At first sight, the first two elements of this proposal show an uncanny resemblance with the visionary educational programme put forward in the 1260s by Roger Bacon, who had complained about the scholastic edifice of learning, and instead championed a new moral philosophy, a thorough overhaul of language studies, and a broad study of geography, natural philosophy, mathematics and related disciplines.⁶⁴ However, whereas Roger Bacon (who, contrary to Agricola, did not reject the scholastic method in itself) had been willing to look for new developments in each and every field in a very pragmatic fashion, intending to assign a place to empirical (and at times even experimental) approaches towards the study of natural phenomena, the humanist Rudolf Agricola, like most of his humanist colleagues, was adamant that the classical authors alone were authoritative in every branch of secular knowledge. For the humanists, the study of geography, natural philosophy, medicine and law was a literary affair, to be embarked upon solely with recourse to classical writers. They did not envisage an empirical or experimental approach to these subjects, nor were they willing to look at the work of medieval

⁶³ AGRICOLA, *De Formando Studio* (1531).

⁶⁴ ROGER BACON unfolded his programme of educational reform in his *Opus Majus*, his *Opus Minus* and his *Opus Tertium*. For an up to date analysis of their educational and scholarly vision, see the 1997 volume *Roger Bacon and the Sciences*.

authorities in these fields, not even where the latter had moved far beyond the legacy of classical antiquity.

Whatever its merits, by the end of the fifteenth century the humanist programme of educational reform was making itself felt at the Latin schools and the arts faculties of Europe, most significantly in the disciplines of the *trivium*.⁶⁵ This reform became apparent in the more comprehensive approach to Latin grammar and language training with recourse to classical literature, initiatives to introduce the study of Greek and Hebrew, a far more pronounced attention for Ciceronian rhetoric, and attempts to either curb the traditional dominance of Aristotelian logic, or to amend it in a humanist fashion. New text books on logic now became available, such as Valla's *Repastinatio Dialecticae et Philosophiae* (1439) and the influential *De Inventione Dialectica* (c. 1480) by Rudolf Agricola.⁶⁶ Such humanist logical handbooks moved away from the alleged medieval subtleties of purely analytic syllogistic reasoning, devising instead a combination of rhetoric and logic that focused on *inventio*: the proper ordering of the subject matter, enabling pupils to produce convincing and truthful arguments.⁶⁷

Overall, this reform brought language itself to the forefront of education. No longer was language seen as a vehicle that had to be learned in order to move on to the *res* themselves, a procedure which during the later medieval period had resulted in a dynamic and living, albeit at times technical and 'grammatically incorrect' latinity (used as a powerful instrument in the various disciplines). Now, Latin and Greek language and literature moved to centre stage, as core disciplines for the acquisition of proper knowledge and for gaining a proper insight into the lofty nature of the human condition.

This primordial importance attached to language, as well as the philological acumen and grammatical outlook expected in all those who were to engage in further study, threatened established conceptions of scholarship in the higher faculties of law, medicine, and theology. Some aspects of these problems had already come to the fore in Petrarch's critique of Italian scholastic medicine. When, in the closing decades of the fifteenth and especially during the first decades of the sixteenth century, the *studia humanitatis* changed the

⁶⁵ The introduction of humanist curricular elements in the arts faculties of the German lands has been dealt with in OVERFIELD, *Humanism and Scholasticism*.

⁶⁶ In the course of the sixteenth century, many German universities were also to make use of MELANCHTHON's *Erortematum Dialectices Libri* (1520).

⁶⁷ WOODWARD, *Studies in Education*, 100ff.

proper methodology of scholarship in all fields of study, many theologians became seriously disturbed. They found it difficult to accept the humanist notion that a grounding in classical languages and poetry could be a proper foundation for the study of theology. This cut at the root of the late medieval notion of theology as a dialectically built *scientia*: a science based on rational principles, established authority, and proper definitions. Elements of this anxiety can be seen in the conflict between Erasmus and the Louvain theologians, who found fault with Erasmus' support of the Louvain *Collegium Trilingue* (1517). Many scholastic theologians found it even more difficult to accept that humanist grammarians and philologists, armed with a new and 'pagan-' inspired linguistic approach to the text, began to criticise the ultimate authoritative text on which many theological arguments relied: the Vulgate Bible. Valla's grammatical and philological forays into biblical studies had already caused serious alarm. This conflict culminated after the publication of Erasmus' *Novum Instrumentum* (1516) and the criticisms of humanist reformers in the camp of Luther, who exploited Erasmus' arguments for their own reformist purposes.⁶⁸

Another important and to some extent innovative aspect of humanist education was the conviction that knowledge, virtue, piety, and practice were indivisible, and that this whole conglomerate was important not simply for the learned and the clerical elite, but ideally constitutive for all (men). Several Italian humanists had professed this ideal in the context of the Italian city state, shaping the elements of what Hans Baron and later scholars have coined 'civic humanism.'⁶⁹ Soon this ideal spread beyond the Italian urban landscape. The educational programme of Rudolf Agricola, whose writings and whose personality had such a large impact on northern humanism throughout, was not only aimed at the academic professional but at all true future citizens of the commonwealth (although first and foremost he had all men with public responsibilities in mind, be they rulers, judges, advocates, priests, preachers, or teachers). More developed, we find such encompassing educational visions in the works of Erasmus, Vives, and Melanchthon, who coupled the *studia humanitatis* with the Christian notion of *pietas*, and transformed the humanist pedagogical method into an influential programme for the education of Christian society.

⁶⁸ RUMMEL, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate*, 69–71.

⁶⁹ BARON, *In Search of Florentine Civic Humanism*, *passim*.

The apex of humanist pedagogy: Erasmus, Vives, Melanchthon

Erasmus is probably the most famous, as well as the more conventional of these three. Among his proper pedagogical works, we can single out *De Civilitate Morum Puerilium* (1526), the *Declamatio de Pueris Instituendis*, and *De Ratione Studii*.⁷⁰ The first two of these deal with the education of the very young. As mentioned earlier, *De Civilitate* is in many ways rather traditional, albeit draped in a humanist cloak and, like the work of Vives mentioned below, is more concerned with the emotional development of the early child than would be the case with medieval counterparts we might encounter. The most interesting element of the *Declamatio de Pueris Instituendis* is its consistent emphasis on teaching *per lusum* the (male) child the kernel of morality, which amounts to basic catechistic elements, a training in civil speech, and the acquisition of proper bodily comportment. This 'playful' initial education, in which the mother is assigned a specific responsibility, should lay the first foundations for a more systematic training of the child after reaching his seventh year.

This more systematic training seems to be the main subject of *De Ratione Studii ac Legendi Interpretandique Auctores*.⁷¹ Reaching back to traditional classical and medieval discussions of the disciplines, Erasmus distinguishes between a knowledge of words and a knowledge of things. Like medieval educators before him, Erasmus indicates that the knowledge of words (through a proper acquaintance with grammar, rhetoric and logic) is a precondition for the knowledge of things. Yet, echoing Valla and Rudolf Agricola, Erasmus reproaches his medieval precursors for not having paid proper attention to the knowledge of words, and especially the disciplines of grammar and rhetoric. In *De Ratione Studii*, Erasmus makes a case for the pre-eminent position of grammar. Young boys should be properly trained in Greek and Latin. This not only means that they should be immersed in the grammatical rules that govern these languages, but should also be thoroughly acquainted with many edifying proverbs and aphorisms

⁷⁰ For immediate access to these writings, see for instance ERASMUS, *Ausgewählte Pädagogische Schriften*. For *De civilitate morum puerilium* (On Good Manners for Boys); *De pueris statim ac liberaliter instituendis declamatio* (A Declamation on the Subject of Early Liberal Education for Children), see also: *Collected Works of Erasmus XXV*, 269ff. and *Collected Works of Erasmus XXVI*, 291–346. There are various modern studies on Erasmus as educator. See especially SCHOCH VON FISCHENTHAL, *Die Bedeutung der Erziehung*, passim. See also BÖHME, *Bildungsgeschichte*, 277–278.

⁷¹ Edited in: *Collected Works of Erasmus XXIV*, 661–691. The first version of *De Ratione Studii* appeared in 1511. Revised editions followed in 1512, in 1514 and afterwards.

(through stock phrases from classical grammarians, literary texts, the works of Valla, and Erasmus' own moral primers),⁷² and a basic canon of Latin and Greek literature (for the purpose of which Erasmus provides reading lists of 'indispensable' classical and patristic Greek and Latin texts). Through these proverbs and aphorisms, and the thorough acquaintance with suitable literature, the child should gain access to the wisdom of the ancients, all major elements of which should be committed to memory. The wisdom hidden in the texts of the ancients was to open the door to a proper knowledge of things. Again echoing Valla and Agricola, Erasmus was convinced that a sound and comprehensive immersion in Greek and Latin literature, history, moral and natural philosophy would provide young pupils with a proper knowledge of a wide range of subjects, thus changing the child's *tabula rasa* into a well-educated mind.

Whereas in essence this programme did not differ greatly from the encyclopaedism exhibited by medieval educators like Bartholomew Anglicus and Vincent of Beauvais, the formation of a well-educated mind was now no longer based on *florilegia* and excerpts (or on recently gained empirical and experimental knowledge) but on reading the major Greek and Roman sources in full. After these general statements on educational method, Erasmus gives a step-by-step introduction to the way in which young boys should learn to read, to write and speak (properly using figures of speech and the right style for each subject), and expounds in detail which classical authors are of paramount importance at each step in this educational process.

⁷² Erasmus did not simply envisage a curricular change—elements of which could be found in many earlier educational treatises from the later Middle Ages onwards —, but was very much keen to restyle the individual disciplines themselves, by advocating Valla's *Elegantiae Linguae Latinae*, the new, humanist, dialectic, and by devising (like other humanists) his own set of moral and rhetorical primers for use in the classroom. Aside from his *Colloquia* and *Adagia*, which soon became standard works in Latin schools for the training of language and morals of the young, probably his most fundamental work in this regard is his *Copia*, the first official edition of which (*De duplici copia rerum ac verborum commentarii duo*) appeared in 1512. The work was quickly adopted as a textbook of rhetoric in schools and universities all over Europe. Cf. the introduction to the translation of the *Copia*, in: *Collected Works of Erasmus XXIV*, 283. For his dependence on previous Italian humanists in this, see KRISTELLER, 'Erasmus from an Italian Perspective', 1–14. On a more theoretical level, Erasmus also came up with methodological considerations for the 'higher' discipline of theology. The most important of these, no doubt, is the *Methodus*, one of the texts included among the *Prolegomena* of his *Novum Instrumentum*, and published separately as the *Ratio Verae Theologiae* (1518). It expounds the importance of languages (Latin, Greek, Hebrew) for the study of theology and, developing Valla's insights, insists on a proper philological method in scriptural theology.

At the end of the booklet, Erasmus also insists that the teachers themselves should be conscientious and learned, shaped by the same process that was moulding the pupils, lest the latter be hampered in their progress by the inadequate language skills and deficient knowledge of their seniors.

It is very clear that, for Erasmus, the study of classical language and literature was conducive to the development of piety, proper behaviour and correct religious feeling. Through an immersion in classical literature and classical learning, the pupil would also be imbued with the classical social codes, the classical standards of personal bearing, and the stoic notion of the total correspondence between outer and inner life (which, as we have seen before, also had its medieval counterparts). Erasmus was adamant that all this would facilitate true religiosity, while a command of the classical languages would help the more advanced student with biblical exegesis and the study of the church fathers. Moreover, in classical literature, philosophy and history, modern man could find a socio-political ideal useful for the here and now. Finally, as always closely following Valla, Erasmus maintained that a systematic study of ancient writers could purify and advance human knowledge in all disciplines, since in his opinion the Greek and Roman authors together comprised all knowledge vital to mankind, not only in law, religion, politics, and literature, but also in medicine, education, mathematics, the sciences, politics and war. Hence, medieval innovations in the fields of logic, mathematics, mechanics, optics, and geography were conveniently ignored.

Whatever their conventional nature, these educational works of Erasmus exhibited a fundamental optimism, and played down the late medieval theological emphasis on man's moral and intellectual deficiencies, caused by original sin. Almost like Pico della Mirandola and Aeneas Sylvius Piccolomini before him, Erasmus did not believe that original sin stood in the way of raising a child to proper *ingenium* and piety. On the contrary, a good humanist upbringing was consistent with the natural tendencies of man, and exploited his natural faculties to the full. A lack of true education and a harsh treatment of the child, on the other hand, were conducive to the creation of a negative second nature.⁷³

⁷³ 'Der Mensch ist erziehungsfähig und -bedürftig.' SCHOCH VON FISCHENTHAL, *Die Bedeutung der Erziehung*, 208–209, 239. Cf. also Piccolomini's small *De Librorum Educatione* (1450), written for King Ladislaus of Bohemia.

Even more wide-ranging than Erasmus' pedagogical works are the monumental educational works of Juan Luis Vives (1492–1540). Like his fellow humanists, Vives engaged in fierce attacks on scholasticism. He also wrote several actual school texts, such as the *Exercitatio* and the *Satellitium* which, just like Erasmus' famous moral and grammatical primers, were meant for use in the classroom and in other teacher-pupil encounters.⁷⁴ Of greater interest for the methodology of education are his various pedagogical guides, several of which did not limit themselves to the education of male children, but also dealt with the underdeveloped field of female education. In 1523, while in England and engaged in the education of Princess Mary Tudor (the daughter of Queen Catherine of Aragon), Vives produced his *De Institutione Feminae Christianae*.

In this text, Vives was less negative about the intellectual capacities of women than most medieval⁷⁵ and humanist authors (including Erasmus).⁷⁶ However, in line with most of his contemporaries, he firmly consigned women's education to the context of their domestic moral and educational obligations: they should obtain moral dignity

⁷⁴ Cf. WOODWARD, *Studies in Education*, 183.

⁷⁵ With as major exceptions Vincent of Beauvais, Bernardino da Siena, and, of course, Francesc Eiximenis (d. 1409), whose own *Llibre de les Dones* is said to have had a significant influence on the viewpoints of Juan Luis Vives. Cf. VIERA, 'Influjo el Llibre de les dones', 145–155; PAPY, 'Juan Luis Vives (1492–1540) on the education of girls', 739–765.

⁷⁶ With as possible exceptions Vittorino, Gregorio Corraro, and Leonardo Bruni. Cf. MÜLLER, *Bildung und Erziehung*, 78ff. The most famous Italian humanist treatise on female education is probably Leonardi Bruni's, *De Studiis et Litteris* (c. 1405), addressed to Baptista di Montefeltro, the younger daughter of Count Antonio of Urbino. In this text, partly written in opposition against the invectives of the Dominicans of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, Bruni makes it clear that the foundation of all true learning is a thorough command of Latin. Hence, women should also engage in a proper study of Latin grammar and read the appropriate classical and patristic authors. However, Bruni is adamant about curtailing women's access to the disciplines of the *quadrivium*, and also deems the study of rhetoric not fitting for the female sex. He could not see women having a use for real oratorical skills; these pertained to the public life that was beyond the female world: the private world of the household and the family. Cf. *De Studiis et Litteris*, 119–133. Erasmus' *Institutio Matrimonii Christiani* and other works saw an important role for the mother in the early education of the young child (under seven). Notwithstanding his friendly acquaintance with several erudite women in the households of More and Pirckheimer, and his correspondence with Caritas Pirckheimer (who also figured in Erasmus' *Colloquium Abbatis et Eruditae*) and other Poor Clares, Erasmus (following the misogynous lead of his favourite church father Jerome) did not have a high opinion of female intelligence in general and was convinced that the education of girls and women should be confined to their being trained in moral duty and religious obedience.

and learn to abstain from their 'natural' frivolity.⁷⁷ Hence, Vives envisaged a rather limited and controlled education of women, which did not include an introduction to more profane literature and rhetorical skills, and which focused on a canon of pious reading that would cultivate female piety, and could furnish 'sound' principles steering the 'weak' female character towards self-negation, self-control, and deference to male authority. In short, female education should turn the young maiden into the perfect spouse for the erudite male head of the household. It was, with all its emphasis on cultivating the female mind, not so very different from the moral teachings found in the sermons of late medieval preachers, and of course very similar to the patriarchal educational picture outlined in the Lutheran catechistic programme.⁷⁸

In the same year that Vives produced his *De Institutione Feminae Christianae*, he also wrote his very Erasmian *De Ratione Studii Puerilis*. Yet, Vives' major pedagogical works are his giant *Libri de Disciplinis* (1531), which, as Kristeller has pointed out, amount to an 'ambitious attempt to substitute a classical and humanist encyclopaedia of learning for the medieval one and exercised a deep and wide influence on Western education.'⁷⁹ The first work of the series, *De Causis Corruptarum Artium*, is merely another fierce attack on scholasticism, focusing on the causes of the 'decline' of knowledge over the centuries, due to a lack of proper instruction in Latin and Greek, to the scholastic 'perversion' of Aristotelian logic, the ignorance of 'true natural science' in the schools (a subject which, according to Vives, had to be acquired by reading the works of classical authors in full), a decline of moral philosophy, and the barrenness of legal studies.

For present purposes, the second part, *De Tradendis Disciplinis seu de Institutione Christiana*, is more important, as it deals with the methods, instruments, and curricula of a proper education in a far more constructive manner. It is probably the only humanist pedagogical treatise that in scope, structure, and overall anthropological vision can vie with its large medieval competitors (such as the works of Vincent of Beauvais and Guibert of Tournai's (*E*)*Rudimentum Doctrinae*),

⁷⁷ VIVES, *De Institutione Feminae Christianae*, chapters 1 & 2. Cf. WOODWARD, *Studies in Education*, 204ff.

⁷⁸ See on the latter especially BAST's 1997 study *Honor your Fathers*.

⁷⁹ KRISTELLER, *Renaissance Thought and its Sources*, 47. For an in-depth analysis of the *Libri de Disciplinis*, see especially TORRO's 1932 book *La pedagogica científica* and FERRER & GARRIDO's *Vives y la psicología educativo*.

and is much more thorough than the essayistic and relatively unstructured pedagogical utterances of Erasmus and many other humanists.⁸⁰

De Tradendis Disciplinis comprehensively demonstrates the proverbial humanist emphasis on language acquisition and on reshuffling the relationship between rhetoric and dialectic, and advocates a predominantly classical canon in the fields of literature, history, philosophy, and the sciences. Much of it closely follows everything that we encounter amongst Italian humanists Valla, Agricola, and Erasmus. Like Erasmus, Vives saw a strong connection between erudition and Christian piety. Likewise, Vives shared Erasmus' views on the necessary capabilities of teachers and on the necessary playfulness in the private education of the very young in a domestic setting (until the age of seven, when boys according to Vives should be sent to a *gymnasium civitatis publicum*). *De Tradendis Disciplinis* is particularly interesting because it is much more systematic and thorough than any prior humanist educational work, and because it includes a comprehensive psychological discourse on the mental growth of the pupil, explaining how educational methods might fully exploit the soul's capacities (notably sensation, memory, imagination and judgment) and tap into the specific strengths of individual ingenuity. Building more extensively on late medieval psychological insights than was common among humanist authors, Vives enveloped his educational programme in a wider anthropological vision, therewith paving the way for the disciplinary emancipation of pedagogy and laying the foundations for a proper developmental psychology.

Philip Melanchthon (1497–1560), besides Vives probably the most influential advocate of a humanist education (be it in a Lutheran context), was himself the product of a proper humanist upbringing. When a young professor at Wittenberg, Melanchthon established a private Latin school for boys in his own house, experimenting with a rejuvenated curriculum, the major humanistic elements of which were the cultivation of refined Latin speech, the training of manners, and the perfecting of rhetoric and declamation in theatre performances.⁸¹

Because of his own experiences, his scholarly activities, and his connections with the Lutheran reform movement, Melanchthon became convinced that only a humanist education could make the individual pupil capable of critical thought. This, in turn, should enable him

⁸⁰ Cf. BÖHME, *Bildungsgeschichte*, 145.

⁸¹ STUPPERICH, *Philipp Melanchthon*, 40; WOODWARD, *Studies in Education*, 215.

to engage in proper moral actions, to develop piety, and to obtain a correct insight into biblical truth and the Christian faith. Hence, the need for a fundamental overhaul of the educational system, which Melanchthon dwelt upon in various treatises. His 1518 inaugural lecture *De Corrigendis Adolescentium Studiis* at Wittenberg University laments in typical humanist fashion the 'steady decline' of education from biblical times onwards. He maintained that this decline hampered man's understanding of the liberal arts, philosophy, and Scripture. Modifying the humanist vision of the past to suit his own reformatory purposes, Melanchthon distinguished four ages of the Church. After the brilliant times of Christ, the apostles, and the Church fathers, the dark ages of the medieval period had obscured learning and religiosity alike, as could still be seen in the religious failures and the ignorance rampant in his own day and age. Yet, the present times saw the rediscovery of antiquity's true legacy and the restoration of a true Christian religiosity, thanks to the reforms of Luther.⁸² In Melanchthon's rhetorical stance of the humanist reformer, the medieval period was disqualified completely. During that 'dark interlude', due to the deficiencies in secular and religious learning, the pure Christian faith would have been reduced to a mere crust of ceremonies, human traditions, faulty decretals, and second-rate glosses.

It was the task of the new university of Wittenberg (it had been established in 1502, from the outset assigning the humanist disciplines a more important place than was common in medieval universities) to approach the study of the liberal arts, philosophy and Scripture in a totally new way. Both in his inaugural lecture and his 1532 statutes Melanchthon insisted that the university should cast aside the methods and content of scholasticism, and should teach the subjects that in his eyes really mattered: languages (Latin, Greek, Hebrew), literature, history, rhetoric, and mathematics. These subjects should constitute a firm foundation for a truly Christian philosophy.

Melanchthon also devised detailed methods and practical guides for a proper appropriation of these subjects and their accompanying literary and philosophical culture; witness his various course books for the study of language and literature (such as his *Enchiridion Elementorum Puerilium* from 1524), his logical and rhetorical handbooks, and his curricular proposals for the instruction of different age groups.⁸³

⁸² STUPPERICH, *Philipp Melanchthon*, 37.

⁸³ Cf. WOODWARD, *Studies in Education*, 219–222.

Grammatical studies and classical literature did not only teach manners and provide an insight into nature (*cognitio rerum*), but also taught students to express themselves coherently and fluently. Humanist rhetoric, strongly based on Quintilian and Cicero, would provide man with the proper skills of reasoning, eloquence and writing, unlike the scholastic *trivium* of old. It was rhetoric that would assist the new Christians in voicing the truth of their religion in the most convincing way. History, in turn, provided knowledge of God's work through the ages, and taught practical wisdom through its praiseworthy and cautionary examples. Therefore, it was both Cicero's *magistra vitae* and a witness of the relationship between God and man. Fully conversant with all these humanist disciplines of language, literature, rhetoric, and history, students could hope to approach Scripture in a fruitful fashion, reading and understanding it properly. However, at the core of Melanchthon's educational vision, a dichotomy remained. The *studia humanitatis* and the study of the Bible were neatly distinguished from one another, even when the former were presented as instrumental to a fruitful involvement with the latter (in essence an Augustinian viewpoint, shared by many late medieval critics of scholastic theology). The big mistake of scholasticism was said to have been the conflation of theology with Aristotelian logic, thus obfuscating the central revealed truths of Christianity as put forward in the biblical narrative.

Melanchthon's successes in restructuring the Wittenberg curriculum ensured that he was asked to give curricular advice at the foundation and/or reform of several other universities, such as Marburg (1527), Tübingen (1535), Leipzig (1539), Königsberg (1544), and Heidelberg (1557).⁸⁴ Yet his educational initiatives did not stop at university level. His own private school at Wittenberg had become a laboratory for humanist pedagogical innovation. Soon, he tried to transplant these experiences to other institutions for primary and secondary education. A good example of this is Melanchthon's 1526 address *In Laudem Novae Scholae*,⁸⁵ directed to the city council and the merchants of Nuremberg, who, in response to Luther's 1524 call on German towns to establish Christian schools (*An die Bürgermeister und Ratsherrn deutscher Städte*), had established a new school for the education of urban youth. After stating once again that the medieval

⁸⁴ STUPPERICH, *Philipp Melanchthon*, 45; WOODWARD, *Studies in Education*, 214ff.

⁸⁵ MELANCHTHON, *In Laudem Novae Scholae*, 53–54.

period had been one of sad decline in learning and doctrine, and after hailing the fifteenth-century Florentine humanists, who had revived the *honestae artes*, Melanchthon sketched the importance of a good liberal education. He presented it as a *sine qua non* for the appropriation of virtue, knowledge of truth and falsehood, and a sense of humanity. In short, the *studia humanitatis*, i.e. the studies of language, history, and literature stimulated moral and intellectual development and enticed the students to combine religious and learned piety with civic responsibility.

The pupils who were to attend such a school, would of course already have received a basic training in comportment and piety, as we can read in Melanchthon's instructions for the visitation of Lutheran parishes in Electoral Saxony (1528), which provide guidelines for elementary catechistic instruction and a set of rules for reformed primary or elementary schools. These instructions and guidelines offered a detailed programme for primary education, combining received late medieval catechistic ideas with a humanist curriculum. Young children should learn to read Latin with the help of a simple grammar and basic texts of religious instruction: the *Pater Noster*, the creed, and a set of approved prayers. The young pupils should learn their grammar and the basic text of religious formation by heart, therewith training their memory skills. In addition, the children should be taught to sing. More advanced pupils were to develop their reading and writing skills, by reading moral primers, like Erasmus' *Colloquia*, Aesop's *Fables*, and classical proverbs, thus building up a large mental archive of moral examples that they could use to guide their speech and behaviour. Thereafter, these school children were to study Latin grammar in depth, learning the rules of etymology and 'correct' Latin sentence structure by heart. At this level, children should already start studying Scripture (in the German vernacular), particularly those biblical books that might inspire them to live a virtuous life and to learn to fear God. This entailed an emphasis on the Gospels and the Psalms. More advanced students should continue to exercise their musical skills, persevere in their grammar study, and start developing their translation skills in combination with reading the works of Cicero, and the poetry of Virgil and Ovid.⁸⁶

⁸⁶ KEEN, *A Melanchthon Reader*, 47–59; PETZOLD, *Die Grundlagen*, 36ff. The text of the *Instructions* can be found in *Luther's Work*, XL, 269–320.

Conclusion

In their manifold educational writings, Erasmus, Vives and Melanchthon coupled the humanist *studia humanitatis* with the Christian notion of piety. Therewith, they implicitly made their educational vision applicable to all people, as piety was a prerequisite for every Christian. For these humanist educators, piety as a mental disposition was the outcome of a proper *Bildung*, and as such the major guarantee that the fruits of learning were conducive to proper civic and religious practice. It is easy to trace elements of this vision back to medieval developments, as I have tried to point out above. Yet the humanist educators did not simply strike a balance between the search for self-knowledge, the development of a humanist civility, and the search for Christ. Nor did they limit themselves to arguing that the proper road towards this proper balance should be embarked upon in infancy, so that the unmoulded natures and minds of young individuals could be fully educated to a true humanity.⁸⁷

The innovative character of these educational programmes relied on the structural changes realised in the various disciplines (which is apparent in the shifting dynamics between grammar, rhetoric, and logic, the increasing awareness of their inter-relatedness, and the moving away from technical languages for individual scholastic disciplines towards a 'natural language' for all domains of theoretical and practical life), a total reform of the literary canon, and the way in which the new canonical texts functioned in the acquisition of knowledge and propagation of the man's *Bildung*. These important changes, and particularly the outright dismissal of medieval authors and texts (as well as the regrouping of patristic texts as Christian classics alongside pagan Greek and Roman literature and philosophy), completely changed the discourse on what constituted proper scholarship. As a side effect, it made it easy to present the humanist educational project as something totally new, even when many discrete elements of it had been foreshadowed in the high and late medieval period. By turning away from medieval authorities (even when they anticipated humanist ideas), humanist educators forced them into oblivion, therewith vindicating the concept of a dark interlude that could and should be passed over in search of true knowledge.⁸⁸

⁸⁷ Cf. ERASMUS, *Ausgewählte Pädagogische Schriften*, 116.

⁸⁸ Cf. RUMMEL, *The Humanist-Scholastic Debate*, 12f.

HUMANIST VALUES IN THE EARLY MODERN DRAMA

Christel Meier-Staubach

Introduction

The turn to Humanism in the cultural life of the fifteenth century is almost nowhere as visible as in the field of drama. Already in the early humanist dramas, language, structure, themes and intention of this genre markedly changed, deviating from the religious play and the morality of the late Middle Ages. Following the pattern of Seneca at first in Italy, of Terence at first in Germany, types of ancient drama are adopted for new programmatic aims. As early as the second decade of the fourteenth century, Albertino Mussato, a member of the Paduan humanist circle, imitates the tragedies of Seneca in his play '*Ecerinis*', which is based on local history.¹ In 1497, Reuchlin as *novus poeta* was eager to imitate Roman comedy in his '*Henno*', through which he introduced the senary and the five act play with choruses between the acts.²

The Prologus draws attention to the fact that he used verse:

*Non est soluta oratio, sed vinculis
Iambicis trimetris ligata comice.*³

(‘It is not prose we are speaking but, after the manner of comedy, harmonious speech in iambic trimeters.’)

My article, however, will not emphasise this development in detail, since it is well known. The humanist drama will rather be examined by looking at the ways it tried to exert influence upon society, and at the means of establishing itself. What function was it supposed to

¹ Cf. MÜLLER, *Früher Humanismus*, 43–55. For the context of the following comments cf. ROLOFF, ‘Neulateinisches Drama’; KÖNNEKER, ‘Schuldrama’; KÜHLMANN, ‘Pädagogische Konzeptionen’; MICHAEL, *Das deutsche Drama der Reformationszeit*. Furthermore BÖHME, *Bildungsgeschichte*; BÖMER, *Die lateinischen Schülergespräche*; CREIZENACH, *Geschichte des neueren Dramas*; HOLSTEIN, *Die Reformation*; KINDERMANN, *Theatergeschichte Europas*; MAASSEN, *Drama und Theater*.

² JOHANNES REUCHLIN, *Henno*, ed. Schnur, 6: Sebastian Brant: ‘Quo duce (sc. Capnione) Germanos comoedia prisca revisit/Et meruit soccis Rhenus inire novis.’

³ JOHANNES REUCHLIN, *Henno*, ed. Schnur, 6: Prologus v. 10f.

have? What were the aims of the public performances that were usually presented by schools and universities? What were the means of performance humanist drama used to attain its main ends? The answers to these questions will mainly depend on the close interdependence of programmatic values and ways of representation, which aimed at specific humanist conceptions and which could develop against the background of an appropriate theoretical horizon.

Mussato and Melanchthon

This article's chosen period (early fourteenth to middle sixteenth century), is framed by two theoretical documents highly significant for our topic: on the one hand the verse epistles on art by Mussato, the first new dramatist, and Philipp Melanchthon's *Epistola de legendis Tragoediis and Comoediis* from 1545 on the other. And it is this theoretical evidence that will first be consulted, before the drama itself and its performance is examined by comparison.

Mussato's first verse epistle, addressed to the 'collegium of Artists', is a sort of literary programme for his coronation as a poet (which is supplemented by the related epistles Four and Seven).⁴ With respect to drama he writes that he concentrates upon imitating the Latin tragedians (i.e. Seneca), disregarding Greek tragedy (of Sophocles) which was not yet available.

*Metra Sophoclaeis non sunt suffulta cothurnis
Haec tua, quidquid habes, lingua Latina dedit.*⁵

('These metres of yours do not stand on Sophoclean cothurns; whatever is yours, the Latin tongue gave it to you.')

Similarly to other members of the Paduan circle of humanists (e.g. Lovato), Mussato in the same epistle describes the virtues of tragedy: its heroes are the leaders and kings, the nobility, whose high standing makes their fall appear even more momentous—just like lightning strikes the highest towers and makes them collapse.⁶ The intention Mussato attributes to his tragedy, which is set among the highest ranks of society, proves to be thoroughly influenced by Stoic ethics.

⁴ MUSSATO, 'Epistolae', eds. Graevius and Burmannus, 33–36, 40–41, 44–45.

⁵ MUSSATO, 'Epistolae', eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 36C.

⁶ MUSSATO, 'Epistolae', eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 36F.

It strengthens the steadiness of a human being in the vicissitudes of life, of fortune, of Fortuna.

*Vox Tragici mentes ad contingentia fortes
efficit, ignavus diluiturque metus,
vincit in adversis semper constantia rebus,
non habet hanc, illis qui rude pectus habet.*⁷

(‘The voice of the tragedian makes the heart strong against vicissitudes, and cowardly fear is destroyed (dispersed). Steadfastness (*constantia*) always has the upper hand in misfortune; this is not possessed by those who are inexperienced in the latter.’)

Highly significant for drama and its theory is the counterforce of *constantia*, to wit *Fortuna*, which as the endangering power destroys high-ranking persons in the first place and threatens human life:

*Materiam Tragico Fortuna volubilis auget,
Quo magis ex alto culmine regna ruunt,
Illaque conclamans per tristia verba cothurnus
Personat Archilochi sub feritate metri.
Proficit hoc nimium Mortalibus utile carmen,
Quum nihil in nostris computat esse bonis,
Conspicitur nulla stabilis dominatus in aula,
Certaque de sola est mobilitate fides.*⁸

(‘The inconstant (*volubilis*) *Fortuna* augments the material of the tragic poet; all the more the rich tumble down from the high summit, and the drama, with the violent metre of Archilochus, illustrates them with mourning words. This useful song is of great service for humankind, since it pays no heed to our goods (of fortune); secure reign can be seen in no royal residence and is possible only firm trust in change.’)

If tragedy—following the model of Seneca—shows the vicissitudes, the splendor and the catastrophes of the ruling class and encourages magnanimity and steadiness,⁹ it has political-emancipatory tendencies; moreover it teaches us to neglect material goods and not to be discouraged in all kind of needs.

About two hundred years later, the humanist and reformer Philipp Melanchthon in his *Epistola* on reading tragedy and comedy explains the benefits of drama, and he does this with a profound understanding also of Greek tragedy and Old comedy (Sophocles, Euripides and Aristophanes); thanks to humanist education, the general knowledge

⁷ MUSSATO, ‘Epistolae’, eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 35F.

⁸ MUSSATO, ‘Epistolae’, eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 36A.

⁹ Cf. note 7.

of Greek had in the meantime been regained. To a considerable amount this was due to Melanchthon. His reflections on drama form the introduction to his edition of Terence from 1545.¹⁰ However, they are mainly centred on Greek drama. There the intended effect of drama can be found as much in reference to the several types of recipients as to the use itself. It would include the wise and the common people (*sapientes et populus*),¹¹ and would embody a universal humanist teaching about the conduct of life, even if on the surface comedy may look like amusement and erotic tales.¹²

The main virtue of theatre, however, consists of the fact that it conveys the perception of a divine justice proceeding from a *mens aeterna: quae semper atrocia scelera insignibus exemplis punit*,¹³ to those who observe moderation and justice she grants a quieter way of life.¹⁴ Looking at the representations (*imagines*) of terrible misfortunes moves the mind, evokes compassion, sticks in memory, provokes thought, calls for moderation.¹⁵

According to Melanchthon the theatre offers examples which elucidate the circumstances of human life.¹⁶ They will incite reflection

¹⁰ PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola (. . .) de legendis Tragoediis et Comoediis', in *Opera . . . omnia*, ed. Bretschneider, 567–572.

¹¹ 'Haec igitur agebantur, spectabantur, legebantur, audiebantur et a sapientibus et a populo, non ut erotica, sed ut doctrina de gubernatione vitae.' 'Cum autem semper in gubernatione civitatum similes sint alii bonorum alii malorum, quos Comoediae describunt, utile est, imagines utrorumque, virtutes, vicia, eventus, eventuum causas diligenter considerare, ut commonefacti eligamus iusta et moderata consilia, nec accendi nos ambitione, iracundia . . . sinamus, ut extra metas officii provehamur, aut moveamus res iniustas aut non necessarias.' PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 568.

¹² 'Equidem vetus Comoedia propior est Tragoediae. Apud *Aristophanem* non sunt meretricum, amatorum, lenonum colloquia, sed exempla civium, quorum alii Republicae bene rexerunt, alii turbarunt ac everterunt. Et dissimilitudo voluntatum, consiliorum et eventuum proponitur ad commonefaciendos spectatores aut lectores, quales singuli gubernatores sint, qui probandi, qui imitandi, qui fugiendi.' PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 569.

¹³ 'Hanc sententiam volunt omnium animis infigere, esse aliquam mentem aeternam, quae semper atrocia scelera insignibus exemplis punit.' PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 568.

¹⁴ 'Moderatis vero et iustis plerunque dat tranquilliores cursum.' PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 568.

¹⁵ 'Qua in re et hoc singularis prudentiae fuit, eligere argumenta non vulgarij casuum, sed insignium et atrocium, quorum commemoratione cohorrerent tota theatra. Non enim movetur populus levium aut mediocrium miseriarum cogitatione, sed terribilis species obicienda est oculis, quae penetret in animos et diu haereat, et moveat illa ipsa commiseratione, ut de causis humanarum calamitatum cogitent, et singuli se ad illas imagines conferant.' PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 567.

¹⁶ 'Eventus isti commonefaciebant homines de causis humanarum calamitatum, quas accersi et cumulari pravis cupiditatibus, in his exemplis cernebant.' PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 568.

upon the conditions of contingency and the ways to master them: *sese ad cogitationem de vitae humanae miseris, remediis et gubernatione exuscitant*.¹⁷ The representations on stage, in their interaction of acting and speech set up patterns of symbolic communication, which present a guideline for the audience. On the one hand, they develop a programme of eloquence and on the other an ethics of virtue.¹⁸ By their agonal form the audience is conditioned on two levels; they prepare or provoke it to make appropriate decisions and to do certain things or rather to avoid them by analogy with the actors of the drama. This happens in a private as well as in a political context; for also the private new comedy of Antiquity, according to Melanchthon, carries a hidden political meaning, and does not only present an amorous story: *tecte fictis nominibus et privatis personis potentiores significabatur*.¹⁹ The central values are taken from the Aristotelean-Christian tradition, namely divine justice and the acceptance thereof as well as *moderatio*.²⁰ Under their direction the reading of ancient drama can itself produce an effect in the present, and also stimulate new creations within this genre: *Possumus enim et haec ipsa exempla ad praesentia negotia apte transferre, et his lectis multa ipsi excogitare similia*.²¹

Imitation of the ancients keeps one from writing the silly showpieces of the present (*insulsi ioci [sc. amatorii], quales nunc sunt scurrarum aulicorum*;²² instead, one should invent well-considered and paradigmatic actions (*sapienter excogitata argumenta*),²³ which are accompanied by instruction and pleasant speech: as *consilia de omnibus vitae partibus* according to ancient standards.²⁴

¹⁷ PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 568.

¹⁸ 'Quare Tragoediarum lectionem valde utilem adolescentibus esse non dubium est, cum ad commonefaciendos animos de multis vitae officiis et de frenandis immoderatis cupiditatibus, tum vero etiam ad eloquentiam. Summus est enim splendor verborum et gestus maxime incurrentis in oculos ad omnes animorum motus cingendas accommodati. Sunt autem haec duo lumina orationis praecipua.' etc. PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 568.

¹⁹ PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 571.

²⁰ 'Saepe de hominum moribus et de disciplina cogitans, Graecorum consilium valde admiror, qui initio Tragoedias populo proposuerunt, nequaquam ut vulgo existimatur, tantum oblectationis causa, sed multo magis, ut rudes ac feros animos consideratione atrocium exemplorum et casuum flecterent ad moderationem et frenandas cupiditates, quod in illis Regum et urbium eventibus imbecillitatem naturae hominum, fortunae inconstantiam et exitus placidos iuste factorum, e contra vero tristissimas scelerum poenas ostendebant.' PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 567. Cf. note 14.

²¹ PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 570.

²² PHILIPP MELANCHTHON, 'Epistola', 571.

²³ Ibidem.

²⁴ Ibidem.

Humanist values and programmatic aims

With examples from humanist dramas, namely characteristic types of scenes, the programmatic aims of this genre will now be pointed out. It consists of linguistic correctness, appreciation of old literature and poetry in general, personal and interpersonal morality, and the corresponding types of political action. The selected typical scenes show a clear correspondence with the programmatic contents they want to convey.²⁵ Symbolic actions such as an examination, *rites de passage*, a dispute, a trial, an encomium etc. have been transformed into dramatic forms of communication. Six chief points of humanist values and programmatic aims are going to be emphasised by means of examples.

1. Language/*Latinitas*
2. Elegance of speech/Rhetoric
3. Rules of conduct (*mores*)/Choice of the way of life
4. Academic subjects/Contest of scientific disciplines
5. Status of poetry
6. Political ethics.

1. *Language/Latinitas*

On 8 March 1480 Jakob Wimpfeling presented the dialogue drama *Stylpho*, the first Latin comedy in Germany (in 1505 also brought to the stage).²⁶ In a satiric key scene, an examination, he characterises the protagonist, Stylpho, who is eager to obtain prebends. Stylpho has a rather meager knowledge of Latin and is also otherwise uneducated. Before receiving his ordination (which he already fancies to have in the bag), he has to be examined by his old teacher Petrucius, the *director scholarum*.²⁷ His arrogant behaviour makes the teacher doubt whether Stylpho has really made an effort in Latin—according to the cutting dictum that it is not easy to make progress in sciences for those, *qui mulorum stabulis et cardinalium lateribus cohaerent*.²⁸ Accordingly, Stylpho completely fails in the examination. Asked for the first line

²⁵ Such scenes or actions are called by me 'szenische Aktionstypen', which I try to describe here.

²⁶ WIMPELING, *Stylpho*, ed. Schnur, 60.

²⁷ WIMPELING, *Stylpho*, ed. Schnur, 28ff.

²⁸ WIMPELING, *Stylpho*, ed. Schnur, 30.

of Virgil's eclogues, he utterly bungles the hexameter so that the teacher says by his way of scanning the verse he makes two out of one.²⁹ His reading of the gospel is not much better. Instead of Christ's admonition to abstain from the leaven of the Pharisees (*attendite a fermento*), he reads: *Accendite a frumento* ('ignite by corn . . .'),³⁰ the phrase 'with girded loins and lit oil lamps' (*lucernae ardentes*) he understands as: 'with ignited latrines (*luternae ardentes*) in his hands.'³¹

Moreover, he is obviously bad at abbreviations and also has difficulties with the graphical difference between t and c.³² He finally conjugates the present indicative of *dixit*, *dixo*, *dixis* and *narraverunt narvo*, *narvas*, *narvare*³³ and eventually is able neither to answer the question of his legitimate descent³⁴ nor that of the definition of sacrament, which he considers a Greek word, he thus demonstrates his failure, and also that of the Middle Ages or what people considered as such at that time.³⁵ The statement of the bishop after having read the result of the examination, 'You are better at minding pigs than souls', will be a fulfilling prophecy at the end of the play, whereas the humanist schoolmate whom Stylpho disparages, attains the office of bishop.³⁶

Not much better is the mastery of Latin of the grammar teacher from the cathedral school in Münster in the drama *Codrus* by Johannes Kerckmeister (himself a teacher in Münster).³⁷ In this work, which is by the way the first book printed in Münster (which to my shame I have to confess), two students from the University of Cologne meet Codrus, the protagonist, outside the city. They are marvelling at his rather strange appearance, until one of them addresses him and learns that he came to see the Magi.³⁸ He looks queer and unkempt: a hunchback with a crooked nose, a long chin, a twisted mouth, carrying

²⁹ Ibidem, 30 ad Vergil, Bucolicum I: 'Hoc sic pacto versus scandere soles, ex uno geminos mihi conficies versiculos.'

³⁰ WIMPHILING, *Stylpho*, ed. Schnur, 32; cf. Matth. 16, 11; Luc. 12, 1.

³¹ Ibidem 32; cf. Luc. 12, 35.

³² WIMPHILING, *Stylpho*, ed. Schnur, 50: 'Dabei ist interessant, daß in frühen Drucken das t so kurz war, daß es leicht mit c verwechselt werden konnte.'

³³ WIMPHILING, *Stylpho*, ed. Schnur, 32.

³⁴ 'Petrucius: Es tu de legitimo thoro? Stylpho: Non, sed sum de Laudenburga.' Ibidem.

³⁵ 'Petrucius: Quid est sacramentum? Stylpho: Est nobilissimum idioma ex fontibus Graecorum ortum habens.' Ibidem.

³⁶ 'Quantum ex Petrucii litteris intellegere possum, aptior es, Stylpho, ut porcos quam homines pascas.' Ibidem. Cf. p. 36 ('Adeo miserabiles dat exitus ignorantia').

³⁷ KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, ed. Mundt, 103; SCHULZE, 'Codrus'; KÜHLMANN, 'Kerckmeister'.

³⁸ KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, ed. Mundt, 10.

a monstrous bundle of grammar books and dictionaries on his back, the weight of which makes him sweat and stagger. Moreover, he constantly pinches his nose and his ears or scratches his backside.³⁹ Just as barbaric as his appearance and his behaviour—which already symbolise the embarrassing and the imperfect—is his Latin, so that he entangles himself in numerous misunderstandings with the versatile Latin spoken by the students of Cologne, although he has been a teacher of grammar for twenty years.⁴⁰ The results are satiric and funny effects in the dramatic scene, and once more a cutting criticism of a school which still reveals a mediaeval character. Since the only meaning he knows of *orare* is ‘to pray’, he takes *orator* to mean ‘monk’; *barbarus* he considers a synonym of *Graecus*, and his salutation goes: *bonum mane, bone homo*.⁴¹ His former pupil is embarrassed about his teacher. Therefore, in spite of his age and his social position, he is treated as *beanus* (an uneducated person, a beginner, a *bec jaune*).⁴² After seemingly being awarded a baccalaureate in a staged formal graduation with feigned honours, he gets a sound thrashing—a form of the *rite de passage* which beginners had to undergo at university.⁴³ When asked the obligatory graduation question by one of the students: *Id ubi Latini didicit?*, the other had answered: *In coquina ceu sit, apud coquos forte*.⁴⁴ What remains for him after all this is to lament and to go home. The artistic device of the dramatist Kerckmeister is that throughout the play Codrus speaks bad Latin, which characterises his role. Stylpho on the other hand had spoken a Latin as perfect as the other persons in the play, and he failed only in the examination.⁴⁵

2. *Elegance of speech*

Humanist drama repeatedly portrays fluency in Latin as the basic skill of the educated person; bad Latin diminishes humanity as is shown

³⁹ KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, ed. Mundt, 3ff. (he seems to be a *monstrum*, a *bestia*).

⁴⁰ KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, ed. Mundt, 6; ‘Marcus: Quot annis ipsam (sc. Grammaticam magistri Alexandri de Villa Dei) legeris, effare. Codrus: Viginti unum annos.’

⁴¹ KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, ed. Mundt, 12, 70f., 10,40 and 5,11. Cf. 118.

⁴² KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, ed. Mundt, 86–88, 111–113. Cf. *Manuale scolarium* (about 1481). See FABRICIUS, *Die Akademische Deposition*, 36ff.

⁴³ FABRICIUS, *Die Akademische Deposition*, passim; KRAUSE, ‘Burschenherrlichkeit’, 20–22.

⁴⁴ KRAUSE, ‘Burschenherrlichkeit’, 78.

⁴⁵ Mundt in KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, 119: ‘In der Technik der Charakterisierung durch die Sprechweise der Personen bedeutet der *Codrus* gegenüber Wimpfeling’s *Stylpho* (1480) einen bemerkenswerten Fortschritt . . .’

by Codrus, the teacher from Münster, or by the young Vincentius in Bebel's *Comoedia*, who at first received the wrong education.⁴⁶ As far as studying is concerned, grammar and rhetoric are the basic subjects—for all courses of studies, by the way. In most dramas their discussion takes the form of a conversation between teacher and pupil in the course of which the pupil is rated, or of a dispute between representatives of the old scholastic line and a humanist.

In order to evaluate the knowledge of the gifted and studious Vigilantius, which knowledge he had acquired during many years of study at the schools of Zwolle and Deventer, Zwickau and Ulm,⁴⁷ the experienced Philologus Paraetianus asks him after his progress in learning, according to which he is rated for university. Thereby it becomes obvious that he is not able to speak good Latin, although he has studied grammar for twelve years and knows many difficult scholastic grammar problems. The Philologus, teacher of ancient literature, says: *Deberes itaque melius intelligere sermonem latinum, quam nosti*. Vigilantius answers: *Latinum illud scholasticum optime teneo, at ita ut tu loqueris, non possum*; that he did not learn.⁴⁸

Settling the score with scholastic grammar teaching, the expected names of the authors of grammar books used in schools are dropped: Alexander de Villa Dei with his *Doctrinale* (in two parts)—he is denounced as corrupter of the youth (*corruptor iuventutis*),—and also John of Garlandia, Alan of Lille, and especially the commentaries on grammar since Remigius of Auxerre,⁴⁹ whose definitions and reservations are dismissed as delusions and snares. The schoolboy, the drama asserts, expresses himself poorly (*ieiunus*) like a three-year-old, although he is the best pupil of the Ulm school.⁵⁰ That he can articulate himself at all is, according to himself, due to his secret reading of the poets. He has, as the philologist states, at least shown good natural dispositions: he had the right sense for language.⁵¹

⁴⁶ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 18, 129.

⁴⁷ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 16, 24f.

⁴⁸ 'Philologus: Valeant praeceptores tui, et in malam crucem abeant, qui te tot annis dedocuerunt et neglexerunt! Deberes utique iam esse latinus' BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 18.

⁴⁹ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 18–20.

⁵⁰ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 22.

⁵¹ 'Ego autem meopte ingenio semper occulta lectione latinum sermonem, quantum tenuitas industriae meae comprehendere potuit, numquam neglexi.' BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 22.

3. *Rules of conduct and choice of one's way of life*

Humanist education is by no means limited to language-acquisition, rhetorical training and matters of literature, but represents a comprehensive concept of education. This can be seen from those scenes of dramas, in which the teacher instructs the pupil, thus staging some educational idea. The living example of the teacher's whole person, or the teacher as an entire human being is to be the figure of orientation. This is also why the process of choosing one's appropriate teacher is so important; it is symbolically shown in Bebel's comedy, as the teaching gradually changes until the ideal teacher is found.

Particular significance is vested in the scene between teacher and pupil, in which the former introduces the latter to his curriculum, commencing with the words: *Communiter haec praecepta tenere debebis, is saltem in clarum evadere vis virum.*⁵² Apparently, the educational aims are open rather than directed towards one profession. (Nowadays, the humanities are returning to the humanist ideal on this point).

The elements of education can be put into doctrines as follows: First—recalling pagan ethics as in Pliny, 'Panegyricus' 1,1, or, Virgil, 'Georgica' 1,338—*venerare deos*. Next come attention and reverence towards the elders and teachers as well as genial behaviour to younger people. Thirdly, behaviour amongst peers shall be determined by fair competition, slanting neither to envy nor to disrespect. In terms of virtues, education demands eagerness and industry. Bodily and mental countenance must reflect unobtrusiveness, decency, and modesty rather than stark exaggeration. Body and mind need to be in harmony with each other as well as with their outward appearance: *Speculum enim mentis (ut dicit Ambrosius) plerumque in verbis refulget . . . ipsa corporis species simulacrum (sit) mentis et figura probitatis.*⁵³ Other scenes practically present what is theoretically conveyed here, e.g. the pupil courteously introducing himself by telling his name or behaving modestly to his elders and teachers, with the respective *personae* expressing their happiness by phrases like *bene dixisti* etc.⁵⁴ The opposite also occurs, as in Macropedius' *Rebelles*, a play about two pert pupils whom their mothers had immensely spoiled. But without their teacher (whom, too, the boys often poked fun at) taking sides for them, they would have ended up on the gallows for their roguish tricks.⁵⁵

⁵² BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 40ff., here 42.

⁵³ *Ibidem*.

⁵⁴ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 40.

⁵⁵ MACROPEDIUS, 'Rebelles', ed. Lindeman; ROLOFF, 'Neulateinisches Drama', 657f.

The educational concept is extended to choosing one's way of living, whenever this (and professional training) is deliberately planned and realized with respect to the humanist ideal or its opposite. Obviously, the humanist dramas show the bad consequences of the latter: the rebels and their all-too-soft mothers, having chosen the wrong path, eventually just escape from their misery, thanks to their wise teacher. In Wimpfeling's *Stylpho*, the choice is represented by two schoolmates, one of whom treads the thorny path of diligence, renouncing material goods but also delighting in mental exercise, whereas the other strives after posts and connections in Rome so as to live in comfortable abundance. Both choices with all their pros and cons are discussed at some length in the play's dialogues. Characteristically, the materialistic brother is made swineherd in the end, whereas the humanist becomes bishop.⁵⁶

4. *Academic subjects/Contest of scientific disciplines*

The dramas typically show what one's course of education ought to look like in modern thinking. They also demonstrate which disciplines are central and which favourite mediaeval subjects can be considered outdated and ought to be abolished. On a lower level, this meant the fight for a proper linguistic education: i.e. grammar. On another level of discussion, late mediaeval conceptions of science and philosophical dialectics are put on trial. A battle of words between a Scotist and an Occamist in Bebel's *Comoedia* illustrates the pedantic subtlety and inflexible stubbornness immanent in dialectics.⁵⁷ Without any real arguments brought forward, the opponents very quickly resort to fiercely insulting and threatening each other with force (not unlike today's football supporters). It is only when the representative of poetry reminds them of their ethos as university philosophers—*Sic et vos facere decet, qui estis homines et hi, qui ceteris modestia praestare debetis*⁵⁸—that they let themselves be urged to fairness, sportsmanlike competition (with a metaphor taken from that field), *fraternitas* and tolerance. The poet's reasons are cogent—and humanist: *Quoniam estis philosophi, estis unius linguae, unius nationis, unius patriae, unius universitatis membra, unius facultatis artisticae filii, unius civitatis incolae, sub*

⁵⁶ WIMPHILING, *Stylpho*: see above.

⁵⁷ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 64ff. ('quintus actus').

⁵⁸ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 70.

*una fide Christiana, sub una Peripateticorum secta.*⁵⁹ They obey the same rules and superiors, enjoy the same privileges, status and have one goal achievable only through an attitude of *pax, concordia, fraternus amor*—this conjuring of tolerance and unanimity possibly needs to be seen against the background of the quarrelling at Tübingen.⁶⁰ As stated here, differences of opinion are no reasons for hatred or envy among human (indeed, humane) beings, but rather for exercising and putting one's opinion on trial. Humanist morality thus proves its significance in terms of politics.⁶¹

5. *Status of poetry*

The dramas repeatedly remind us that poetry is one of the humanists' central themes. Poetry thus becomes the ultimate educational thesaurus for linguistic and ethical improvement as well as political orientation. From this it can be seen how significant the new dramas are for the progress of humanist ideas: as they imply reading classical dramas as well as writing and presenting new ones, they contain components of pedagogic motivation, namely the desired coincidence of teaching both morals and language. This happens in the unifying process of a performance in which a central position is kept by education and its new institutions. Plays are typically written and mostly performed at schools, with the author himself overseeing the performance. Language and gesticulation in rhetorical presentation are predetermined by the play and practised in its performance.

The range of poetry is a topic in Reuchlin's choral odes in *Henno* and is treated similarly in disputes which occur in *Codrus* or Bebel's *Comoedia*. The odes praise the achievement of poetry whereas the dialogues lead to apologetic speeches, both panegyric and argumentative. In accentual and rhyming verse, three of the four choral odes from *Henno* consider poetry in several ways: to begin with, as a divine gift that becomes particularly apparent in the dramas (*ludi scaenici*); next, as having defeated its various enemies such as the un-

⁵⁹ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 70.

⁶⁰ After 1477 (second foundation) a quarrel took place between the realists and the nominalists. BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 121.

⁶¹ 'Poeta: . . . Diversitas enim opinionum non introducta est ad odium atque invidiam, sed ad nudam exercitationem, ut in scholis contrarii, in foro amici et fratres, quemadmodum illi, qui certant pila, lucta, ceterisque gymnasiis, id est exercitationibus.' BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 68.

educated, the envious and those who despise poetry; furthermore, as a force that stands against deceitful lawyers.⁶²

In the chorus, the inventors of poetry are thanked (*Musis, poetis et sacro Phoebos referte gratias*), and the Muse is called upon to work hard day and night for the laurel wreath and all-time glory.⁶³ To conclude, what constitutes the musical and poetic components in this comedy is mainly the panegyric and *adhortatio*.

Doubts, resistance, and even hatred is publicly tolerated in prose discourses on poetry and poetics in which the opponent is clearly defeated and poetry praised in a speech. Lentulus, Bebel's poetry-hating defendant of traditional dialectics, says: *Ego odio poetas propter hoc, quia lascivi sunt et turpia narrant*.⁶⁴ The old-style teacher Codrus even calls poetry a total mess, a 'swinery': *Poetiam volo, que non est aliud quam una tota pocaria*.⁶⁵ The arguments are those that were already used by Plato: immorality on the one hand, lack of truth on the other, as Lentulus in Bebel's *Comoedia* rather simply expresses: *Ego odio poetas propter hoc, quia lascivi sunt et turpia narrant—ego audivi a pueritia, quod poetae libenter mentirentur*.⁶⁶ King Maximilian's courtier, defending poetry on his lord's behalf, responds to the former criticism by suggesting (as an *argumentum auctoritatis*) that poetry had always been held in high esteem by the Fathers of the Church as an advisable occupation; in addition, he comes up with the ultimate argument that from that point of view even the Bible must be condemned, pervaded as it is by immoral *amores* from *Genesis* onwards through virtually every book. E.g. *Librum Hester ne tangito, docebit enim te, quemadmodum Assverus rex amorem amore sicuti clavem clave trudere conatur, et ad impatientiam amoris leniendam per singulas paene noctes novas puellas devirginat*.⁶⁷

In this art of rhetoric, poetry is presented as the first form of philosophy: poets—except only writers of elegiac poetry—are the heralds of virtue (*praecones virtutum*) and censors of vice (such as *metus*,

⁶² REUCHLIN, *Henno*, ed. Schnur, 22, Chorus secundus: 'Digna sunt Apolline quae concinnunt poetae'; REUCHLIN, *Henno*, ed. Schnur, 26, Chorus tertius: 'Musis, poetis et sacro Phoebos referte gratias'; REUCHLIN, *Henno*, ed. Schnur, 32, Chorus quartus: 'Cedant fori contentio eturgia'.

⁶³ See above, furthermore 'Et caelestis Apollinis concentibus/Dies noctes incumbere . . .' REUCHLIN, *Henno*, ed. Schnur, 32.

⁶⁴ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 54.

⁶⁵ KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, ed. Mundt, 61. The fine answer is: 'Et tua pocaria est, non nostra poetica . . .'

⁶⁶ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 54, 62.

⁶⁷ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 56.

ignavia, luxuria, incontinentia, impietas, perfidia etc.). The 'alleged lack of truth' is refuted by suggesting thematical transformation as a means of poetical art and aesthetical *ornatus*; this, too, had been known since late antiquity.⁶⁸

Kerckmeister argues similarly in *Codrus*, when he declares poetry the origin of grammar (*grammatices origo et natura*) and the essence of the Latin language in general. All the classical writers knew that, he says. As without grammar, it would be impossible to understand the Bible (e.g. the Book of Psalms in its poetic content) without poetics—which is why, according to Kerckmeister, Bede wrote the *sacrarum litterarum claves*. Even Jesus himself was a poet, as could be seen from his teaching in parables.⁶⁹

It cannot be denied that there is something obtrusive in this kind of argumentation, which looks very much like a mere resumption of the mediaeval discussions between rigorist theologians and those more favourable to literature. Yet here a new curriculum, an educational programme, is propagated within society in the easily accessible form of the dramatic genre. This happens in the face of actual or imagined dogmatical impediments from the late Middle Ages, and along with the other issues directed towards establishing a new ideal of human interaction.

6. *Political ethics*

The propagation of humanist values through the drama is not limited to the public of one school or town, but it reaches the level of politics. In *Bebel*, it is the courtier, a delegate of King Maximilian, as it were, who makes out the case for poetry in front of the Tübingen university public and points out its huge significance. But already the earliest drama of those that return to classical antiquity (namely Mussato's *Ecerinis*) was essentially political. It was read to the citizens of Padua every Christmas to remind them of their successful fight against the tyrant Ezzelin III and—in consequence—of their obligation to stand up for their liberty.⁷⁰ In this case it was the stoical *constantia* that courageously defied the power of a hostile *Fortuna* and

⁶⁸ BEBEL, *Comoedia*, ed. Barner, 60, 62 ('officium poetae' according to Lactantius, Isidor and Strabo).

⁶⁹ KERCKMEISTER, *Codrus*, ed. Mundt, 61; 63ff., here 65.

⁷⁰ MUSSATO, *Ecerinis*, in MÜLLER, *Früher Humanismus*, 57; cf. ALBERTINO MUSSATO, 'Epistolae', eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 35, v. 45–48.

that of her tool, the tyrant (Mussato himself stresses this as a message conveyed by the dramatic plot, as becomes clear in his notes on theory of tragedy in *Epistle* 1.⁷¹ Again, the agon of power and values takes place in a dialogue that is central to the *Ecerinis*, being placed in the middle of the work. The king's courageous monitor, Friar Lucas, represents a Christian Stoic world view, a law, obedience to which is controlled by a divine rector: *Dictus hic ordo sacer/ Iustitia*.⁷² Thus, Man is saved from his own error as well as from the strokes of fate by his own natural virtues *fides*, *spes* and *castitas*. The effect of law is accentuated in the final ode:

*Haud hic stabilis desinit ordo:
Petit illecebras virtus superas,
Crimen tenebras expetit imas.
Dum licet ergo moniti stabilem
Discite legem.*⁷³

(‘Never will this order cease to exist: Virtue strives after celestial joys, crime after the deepest darkness. Therefore, learn ye, thus admonished, the firm law.’)

Failing to acknowledge this, Ezzelin is unexpectedly hit by military defeat and downfall. Likewise, his brother and family perish.⁷⁴

Quite similarly, political meaning is conveyed by Joseph Grünpeck in his *Comoedia utilissima*, played by sons of noble families at Augsburg in 1497, when king Maximilian visited the place.⁷⁵ This allegorical festival play unites two elements adopted from antiquity: on the one hand, the Golden Age that returns as virtue is restored on earth from where it was previously expelled; on the other hand Hercules at the cross-roads where, in Pythagorean thinking, he must decide upon either virtue or vice. Here, Hercules is the emperor who—albeit in court rather than at a cross-roads, thus introducing a third element to the scene—decides in favour of Virtue and makes her his viceroy, sentencing vice to exile. *Quemadmodum humanitas fert, nequaquam amplius patiar te exilio affigi*, he says as he embraces Virtue.⁷⁶ Cosmopolitan *Welttheater* had been announced in the prologue: *Erit*

⁷¹ MUSSATO, ‘Epistolae’, eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 3.

⁷² MUSSATO, ‘Epistolae’, eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 142ff., here 146, v. 356.

⁷³ MUSSATO, ‘Epistolae’, eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 176, v. 625ff.

⁷⁴ MUSSATO, ‘Epistolae’, eds. Graevius and Burmannus, Ep. I, 167ff.

⁷⁵ GRÜNPECK, ‘Comoedie utilissime’, 15b.

⁷⁶ *Ibidem*.

*quippe speculum totius humani generis (in quo, qui se crebrius intus fuerit, non tam preceps falcicaptrix omnium flagitiorum parentis laqueos incidet)*⁷⁷— and Grünpeck was rewarded for the play with offices at court (he was made writer, historian and chaplain) and with public honours worthy of a poet laureate, which he was made in 1498.⁷⁸

Conclusion

To conclude, humanist dramas were made the vehicles of propaganda by means of several typical scenes and topics, such as Latin exams; *rites de passage* to be passed by those who (supposedly) took up studying; the teacher prescribing rules of conduct; finding a teacher and—sometimes wrongly—choosing one's way of life; arguments on what importance was to be attributed to single disciplines and on the truth of the new doctrine; defence and praise of poetry; the effect of classical-style humanity on the public—whether in fighting a tyrant or in a symbolical court of justice. The new forms of drama are used for perpetrating a new programme of society, they are used for re-education, and the reforms they aim at are their subject and plot at the same time. It remains to be seen, however, why of all genres drama proves to be that significant and capable of reform.

In drama, concepts of education and moral philosophy are realised that are strongly influenced by antique *aemulatio*. This is why reading e.g. the classical dramas is in fact the proper means of renewal. The drama, to sum up, pertaining originally to schools and universities, is made available to a wider public through festival performances at these institutions and begins to show traits of cultural reformism. In the tenth century, Hrotsvitha had tried to keep schools from using classical dramas, especially Terence, by writing Christian counterparts to them,⁷⁹ and Latin comedy was revived in the twelfth-century reading dramas.⁸⁰ By contrast, mediaeval drama proper was originally of liturgical nature, becoming gradually more urban and public, and being performed more and more publicly in the market-place. Both mediaeval school context (as with the reading dramas) and reforming *impetus* in the process of *renovatio* (from 1500

⁷⁷ *Ibidem*, 17.

⁷⁸ WITTENBRINK, 'Grünpeck', 395; cf. ROLOFF, 'Neulateinisches Drama', 653f.

⁷⁹ RÄDLE, 'Hrotsvit von Gandersheim', 202–206.

⁸⁰ See *Lateinische Comoediae des 12. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Suchomski, 1ff.

onwards) account for the humanist drama's ambivalence: on the one hand, it deliberately continues classical drama traditions; on the other, it develops into a means of cultural policy. As such it was usurped by the reformists and finally by the Jesuits.

Dramatic performance aims at a public consensus on the values it conveys.⁸¹

⁸¹ For help with the translation of this article I wish to thank Christoph Helmig and Torsten Weigert.

WHY DID ALBERTI NOT ILLUSTRATE HIS *DE PICTURA*?

Robert Zwijnenberg

Introduction

Leon Battista Alberti's treatise *De Pictura* (1435–36) is best understood as an attempt to elevate painting from its lowly position as a craft, which it still had in Italy at the beginning of the fifteenth century, and endow it with the status of a liberal art. Alberti sought to restore the glory which painting enjoyed in Antiquity. To accomplish this goal, it was necessary to invent a theoretical foundation for it, including a specific technical vocabulary for discussing painting as a liberal art. The liberal arts differ from the mechanical arts precisely in that they are based on general theoretical principles. For such principles and vocabulary Alberti relied on two disciplines that were available to him in particular: mathematics, which he deployed for discussing the quantifiable aspects of painting, and rhetoric, by which he could elaborate subjects associated with form, content and composition, as well as with the relation between paintings and their viewers. Specifically, Alberti tried to achieve his aim by concentrating his discourse in *De Pictura* on linear perspective and its use of optical and geometrical principles; on an analysis of pictorial composition that is couched in rhetorical terms; and on the connection between painting and poetry with respect to the proper selection and representation of subjects as well as regarding advice on the proper education and attitude of the painter. On account of his decidedly theoretical focus, he succeeded not only in giving painting the status of a liberal art, but also in making painting an appropriate subject for civilized, humanist thought and discussion.*

The author himself repeatedly emphasized the novel character of his project. In Chapter 63, for instance, he writes: 'I consider it a

* In the previous century, Caroline van Eck and I repeatedly discussed Alberti's *De Pictura*; the views and opinions she advanced at those occasions turned out to be indispensable for the development of my argument in this paper.

great satisfaction to have taken the palm in this subject, as I was the first to write about this most subtle art.¹ His striving to be original has concrete ramifications for the genre of his text. For one thing, there are no theoretical treatises that have survived from Antiquity; the chapters on painting in Pliny's *Naturalis historiae* merely provide an anecdotal chronicle, a narrative style Alberti clearly was not interested in imitating.² Moreover, his treatise can hardly be classified as a painter's manual in the tradition of Cennino Cennini's *Libro dell'Arte* (written c. 1400), because it ignores a number of essential aspects of painting, such as the use of materials. Nor is his treatise a codification of existing workshop practice, because Alberti failed to mention or discuss any contemporary painter. That *De Pictura* was not intended to be a practical manual for painters is also shown by the importance the author attached to the analysis of linear perspective in terms of mathematical and optical principles, as well as to framing his definitions of the art of painting in the vocabulary of optics and rhetoric.³ Rather than as a primer for young students of painting, *De Pictura* should be viewed as a theory of the art of painting, offering strategies of invention for the painter and strategies of interpretation for the spectator.⁴ As such, Alberti's claim to originality is being reflected in the actual character of his text.

Scholarship on *De Pictura* has elucidated various aspects of its textual dimension. The role of mathematics, for instance, has been studied quite extensively.⁵ Moreover, scholars like Michael Baxandall, Edward Wright, Brian Vickers and Kristine Patz have convincingly

¹ All quotations from *De Pictura* are taken from ALBERTI, *On painting and On Sculpture*.

² Cf. ALBERTI, *On Painting and On Sculpture*, Chapter 26.

³ See FIELD, 'Alberti, the Abacus and Piero della Francesca's Proof of Perspective', 62 for a similar view: 'No reader could mistake *De Pictura* (. . .) for a practical manual destined for the instruction of would-be painters'. Cf. KEMP, Introduction, in ALBERTI, *On Painting*, 2: 'On Painting has no precedence [. . .] the first known book devoted to the intellectual rationale for painting'.

⁴ Alberti's contemporaries noted this double role. See for instance the poem on *De Pictura* by Pietro Barozzi (1441–1507), bishop of Padua, quoted in BAXANDALL, *Giotto and the Orators*, 121: 'Battista's talents, Reader, lead you to facility/In painting and in Latin volubility./He satisfies our ears and eyes./For every hand and tongue a guide supplies'. (Pingere seu discas, seu dicere multa latine,/Baptistae ingenio, lector, utrumque potes./Auribus atque oculis fecit satis, et studiosis/Omnibus, hinc lingua profuit, inde manu.)

⁵ See KEMP, *The Science of Art*, 21–24, who gives an overview of recent literature, and most recently FIELD, 'Alberti, the Abacus and Piero della Francesca's Proof of Perspective'.

argued that Alberti employed rhetorical terms and concepts in order to formulate his theory of painting. Wright has also shown that the structure of Alberti's treatise: the division of *De Pictura* into three books, is based on Quintilian's division of subjects in his *Institutio Oratoria* into *elementa*, *ars*, and *artifex*.⁶

In this article, however, I will focus on one aspect of *De Pictura* that most scholars have either ignored or only touched upon in passing: the fact that Alberti did not use illustrations to clarify his theoretical views. One of Alberti's contemporaries, Francesco di Giorgio Martin, already noted the absence of illustrations in his treatise on architecture, *De Re Aedificatoria*, and he in fact complained about it.⁷ Editors of modern editions of Alberti's *De Pictura* have reiterated this complaint, in particular with regard to his discussion of linear perspective, a subject that is indeed difficult for the reader to understand without illustrations.⁸ For this reason Martin Kemp, in his new 1991 edition of the 1972 Grayson edition and translation of *De Pictura*, provides us with explanatory diagrams that are fully integrated into Alberti's text.⁹ Kemp suggests that his diagrams 'are the most complete in any edition to date' and that in his opinion, 'they are the first to be placed at appropriate points in the actual text' (26). Elsewhere in his *Introduction* Kemp writes that 'Alberti apparently supplied no illustrations' (14), seemingly suggesting that Alberti may have intended to supply drawings but that for some reason he did not. Kemp at least appears confident that his adding explanatory diagrams to the text is neither inappropriate nor in conflict with Alberti's intentions.

We are nevertheless faced with the fact that Alberti decided to refrain from using illustrations in *De Pictura*. There are no illustrations in the surviving manuscripts of the Latin version.¹⁰ We also fail

⁶ Cf. BAXANDALL, *Giotto and the Orators*, 121-40; BAXANDALL, *Painting and Experience*, 135-6; VICKERS, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, 340-53, and PATZ, 'Zum Begriff der *Historia* in Leon Battista Alberti's *De Pictura*'. Cf. GRAFTON, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 116-120.

⁷ See BORSI, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 263-4.

⁸ Grayson does provide explanatory diagrams in the notes to his edition to clarify Alberti's 'over-complicated explanation' and 'woolliness' (110) or 'for the convenience of demonstration' (116). He does not, however, discuss why Alberti himself did not include such diagrams in his text. See also HOPE & McGRATH, 'Artists and Humanists', 166: '[Alberti] was not the inventor of perspective as such, nor did he want to communicate his ideas to artists; otherwise he would surely have provided diagrams, at least in the Italian version. *De Pictura*, indeed, is the only major non-illustrated European discussion of perspective.'

⁹ ALBERTI, *On Painting*.

¹⁰ Not one of the manuscripts is autographed or bears autographed corrections; cf. ALBERTI, *On Painting and On Sculpture*, 2-4.

to have any textual indication that Alberti intended or wished to include illustrations or diagrams. There are several possible explanations for this absence and they do not necessarily exclude each other. In this article, I discuss some of these explanations in detail, but my main focus will be on one explanation that is directly linked with the rhetorical form and content of *De Pictura*. Specifically, I argue that Alberti rejected using illustrations because they would have interfered with the main purpose of Book I of his treatise, which is to *concurrently* describe the construction of linear perspective in painting and explain the theoretical—artistic and intellectual—consequences of linear perspective for the art of painting. In other words, I intend to demonstrate that in his explanation of linear perspective he does not make a clear distinction, or rather avoids making one, between a description of the construction of linear perspective and an explanation of its theoretical consequences. I will suggest that for this reason Alberti could not fall back on explanatory diagrams. As a result, we may have a more adequate understanding and a better appreciation of how he was able to transform rhetorical and mathematical concepts into a meaningful vocabulary for discussing the process of painting.

The lack of illustrations

A first possible explanation for why Alberti did not use illustrations—at least in the Latin version—has to do with the implied audience of his treatise. The Latin version is preceded by a letter in which he dedicates the work to Gianfrancesco Gonzaga, ruler of Mantua (1407–44), whom he probably met in 1438.¹¹ In his dedication to Gonzaga, as well as in his dedication to Filippo Brunelleschi in the Italian version, he emphasizes that what matters to him is art and knowledge (*‘arte e notizia’*), and that he is addressing a learned and erudite audience. That he actually has such an audience in mind is shown by his repeated citation of ancient literary and historical sources—including Cicero, Quintilian and Pliny—which at that point were obligatory readings for any intellectual. In this way Alberti demonstrates not only his knowledgeability to his readers, but also that he takes them seriously as readers of such writings. Alberti makes creative use of his ancient sources; rather than simply citing or para-

¹¹ The dedication dates from the period 1438–44.

phrasing them, he twists or interprets them in a way that fits or illustrates his own views.¹² This creative handling of classical texts was highly appreciated by his well-educated Renaissance audience.¹³ Furthermore, the strongly Ciceronian *De Pictura* is marked by complex and contrived phrasing, and by the alternation of very long sentences and quite abrupt transitions. This suggests that he primarily wrote for people in his immediate surroundings, those associated with the university, city government or the papal court who all spoke and wrote a similar Latin.¹⁴

In this respect, Alberti's treatise radically differs from contemporary treatises that belong to a more technological tradition and that were written by and aimed at members of the 'class of practitioners':¹⁵ those who engage in the *artes mechanicae*. They comprised architects and engineers but also artists (like Brunelleschi and Ghiberti), and they generally read and wrote Italian. In these treatises ample use is made of illustrations. Treatises by Taccola (1381–ca. 1453) and Francesco di Giorgio Martini (1439–1501) in particular relied on the application of various innovative drawing techniques, as a result of which the illustrations of pumps and hoisting apparatus are so clear and detailed that they could perfectly stand alone.¹⁶ This sets them apart from medieval manuscripts on technological subjects, in which illustrations were almost always subordinate to the text; in many cases it is even impossible to understand a drawing without first reading the text.¹⁷

Obviously, Alberti was very familiar with the genre of the technological treatise, if only through his friendship with people like Brunelleschi and Ghiberti.¹⁸ Critical responses to the absence of illustrations

¹² An example is Alberti's interpretation of the game between Apelles and Protogenes (Chapter 31), which has come down to us in Pliny.

¹³ Cf. GRAFTON, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 75.

¹⁴ In *Della Pittura* many of these complex and far-fetched phrases are absent, but in the Italian version Alberti also left out a substantial number of his classical examples. Even though the Italian has an actively sought Latin flavour, the text is still closer to everyday language, in part also because Alberti uses a significantly less varied vocabulary.

¹⁵ DIJKSTERHUIS, *De mechanisering van het wereldbeeld*, 266.

¹⁶ For an extensive discussion of this tradition and the new drawing techniques, see EDGERTON, *The Heritage of Giotto's Geometry*, 108–47. This tradition culminates in the printed technical handbooks of the sixteenth century; see *Ibidem*, 148–92. Cf. also WALLACE, 'Traditional natural philosophy', 208.

¹⁷ See MURDOCH, *Album of Science*, 113–23, 161–70 and 261–74.

¹⁸ GRAFTON, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 124, emphasises that *De Pictura* is rooted in the tradition of these technical treatises.

in his *De Re Aedificatoria* largely came from people who themselves produced technological treatises with illustrations, like Francesco di Giorgio Martini.¹⁹ Ghiberti criticized the one-sided focus on text in *De Pictura* by writing in his *Commentarii*: 'One should not write of sculpture and painting as one does of poetry.'²⁰ Although the treatises of Filarete, *Trattato di Architettura*, and Piero della Francesca, *De Prospectiva Pingendi*, in which the construction of linear perspective is addressed, are directly influenced by Alberti, they primarily belong to the tradition of technological handbooks and contain many explanatory diagrams. If Alberti places his treatise on the art of painting outside the tradition in which artists themselves work and write, the treatises of Filarete and Piero in fact bring Alberti's new insights back to that very tradition.²¹

In this light, it is perhaps striking that Alberti decided not to make use of illustrations in *De Pictura*. However, his decision was certainly a careful one that also seemed to be directly motivated by the readership he had in mind and the aim of his treatise. Alberti sought to demonstrate that painting is an *ars liberalis* on the basis of a mathematical theory and wanted this theory to be accepted in the circle to which he himself belonged: that of humanist scholars.

Since the thirteenth century, painters like Giotto, Maso and De Lorenzetti experimented with perspectival construction methods, which were also described by Cennini.²² Significantly, Marvin Trachtenberg writes about this tradition: 'Trecento perspective—and this is crucial—was *not geometric* in genesis, theory, or technique (or pseudogeometric as the "vanishing axis" notion implies) but strictly *constructional* and *pragmatic*; in other words it was truly *empirical*.'²³ In *De Pictura* Alberti describes and criticises these practical perspectival methods: 'That would be their way of proceeding, and although people say they are following an excellent method of painting, I believe they are not a little mistaken'.²⁴ Next he describes his method of construction, which does have a basis in theory or 'ratio'.²⁵ Had he sub-

¹⁹ BORSI, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 263–64.

²⁰ Cited in BORSI, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 205. Ghiberti further points out: 'It is best to be brief and open like a painter or sculptor in everything about this art, for it has nothing to do with the rules of rhetoric'; cited in BORSI, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 206.

²¹ Cf. FIELD, 'Mathematics and the craft of painting'.

²² CENNINI, *Il Libro dell'Arte*, chapter 87.

²³ TRACHTENBERG, *Dominion of the Eye*, 170.

²⁴ ALBERTI, *On Painting and On Sculpture*, Chapter 19.

²⁵ ALBERTI, *On Painting and On Sculpture*, Chapter 19: 'We will explain the theory behind this if ever we write about the demonstrations of painting'.

sequently added explanatory illustrations to his description, he would have once again joined the methods of a tradition that he rejected and that he more or less aspired to leave behind. Alberti demonstrates that his description of linear perspective is not founded on a practice, but that it may in fact generate a practice on the basis of 'rational' or mathematical considerations that merely have to be understood intellectually rather than visualized. In contrast to the Trecento-perspective, Alberti's perspective is a 'theoretical' one—which is why it can be put into words and why there is no need to use visual illustration; this latter would even undermine the 'theoretical' aspect. Seen in this way, the decision to leave out illustrations is mainly a rhetorical strategy to convince the reader of the purely theoretical nature of his exposition. Rather than allowing readers to fall back on explanatory illustrations, they are directly challenged to rely fully on their intellectual capacities to grasp the issue.

Painting and humanist rhetoric

In *De Pictura* Alberti not only provides a theory of painting (its mathematical basis), but through his mode of presentation also turns painting into a subject for civilized humanist thought and discussion. In order to arrive at the conclusion that painting has a theory, he relies on several formal strategies (theoretical argument, citing the proper literary and historical sources from antiquity, catering to the conceptual powers of his reader) that most effectively and convincingly convey his views and conclusions to his intended audience of humanist scholars.

Thus, in *De Pictura* Alberti provides a demonstration of one of the central tenets of classical rhetoric: the requirement of striving for unity of form and content, or *res* and *verba*, as a way to render a written or spoken text a convincing text. The orator can only be persuasive when he knows his audience and has a precise grasp of his own intentions.²⁶ This allows him to approach the audience in the appropriate manner and evoke a common field of shared emotions and convictions. Specifically, this implies that one subject or theme can be formulated in several ways, depending on the situation, the speaker, his public and his aim. For instance, the defendant may deploy an

²⁶ The content or *ratio rerum* of a speech is selected in the stage of *inventio*; the verbal form or *ratio verborum* is a matter of *elocutio*.

infinite number of pleas, which all carry the same message; but because of their formulation each one of them has a different form and a different signification, and their individual verbal form determines their effectiveness. The rhetorical distinction between *res* and *verba*—which is of course only a theoretical one since in the actual practice of writing or speaking *verba* cannot be separated from *res*—also makes it easier for the public to understand a speech or text. The strategic decisions of the speaker or writer equally function as clues for the public to understand the text's meaning. Considering the importance of the rhetorical relation between *res* and *verba*, it is not surprising that this relation is a frequent theme among rhetoricians.²⁷

Alberti was very familiar with this rhetorical distinction.²⁸ In what follows below, I will argue that this distinction is crucial for another way of understanding why he had no use for illustrations: one that moves away from the understanding suggested in my argument so far. In so doing I will use the rhetorical distinction between *res* and *verba* as an analytical instrument for retracing the meaning of Alberti's text on linear perspective. I assume that Alberti complied with the rhetorical aim of unity of form and content, and that he, as a humanist in heart and soul, viewed writing as an exercise in thinking. To humanists, writing is a self-conscious activity in which the rhetorical notion of the 'right word' is crucial. Whether or not one finds the right word depends on the specific context in which an issue is discussed, although it is also in part an arbitrary process. Quintilian warned us against thoughtlessly accepting the words that merely 'appear' in the act of composing. Instead, we should always actively search for the 'right' word—a challenge that only ends after the very last word is committed to paper (*Institutio Oratoria*, X, iii, 5). If we are further to increase our understanding of *De Pictura* and—as some put it—its unsolved 'mysteries',²⁹ it seems justified, or even rather necessary, to focus on Alberti's language.

²⁷ See, for instance, QUINTILIAN, *Institutio Oratoria*, III.v.1; see also I.v.2 (on the meaning of *verbum*); I.v.3 ('when we praise words, we do so because they suit the matter') and II.iv.37; II.xi on the importance of the distinction between *figure* and *thought*; III.iii.1 and III.iii.7–11 (a discussion of a passage from CICERO, *De partitione oratoria*, where Cicero gave a brief formulation of the relations between *res* and *verba*, and between *inventio* and *elocutio*); and VII.Pr.32–3, which is a summary of Quintilian's ideas about the relations between *res* and *verba*.

²⁸ For Alberti's life and education, see: GRAFTON, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 3–70.

²⁹ Cf. GRAFTON, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 100: 'Further mysteries remain. It is unclear why Alberti—who provided illustrations for *Mathematical Games*, for his work *On*

Finding a new vocabulary

In writing *De Pictura*, Alberti made some conscious decisions about the vocabulary he needed for unfolding his theory of painting and his discussion of linear perspective in particular.³⁰ Alberti himself remarks that he was the first who ever articulated a theory of painting—which is why he could not rely on existing theoretical or technical language. As pointed out already, he used mathematical and rhetorical terms like *compositio* in order to develop a vocabulary that would suit his purposes. His reliance on mathematical notions is understandable in light of the optical and mathematical basis of linear perspective. His use of rhetorical concepts and theoretical insights is undoubtedly related to his knowledge of classical rhetoric, but it is also associated, I feel, with his familiarity with the perspectival paintings of his day and age. In particular the rhetorical distinction between *res* and *verba* is quite appropriate for describing the mechanism of a linear perspectival painting. To clarify this point, I will first give a brief description of the linear perspectival painting with which Alberti was familiar before he wrote *De Pictura*. Next, I will demonstrate how Alberti, in his account of the construction of linear perspective, does justice to the effects of a linear perspectival painting.

Linear perspective is a geometrical construction that takes as its subject the controlled diminution of objects in space from a fixed point of view. Linear perspective does not so much give a depiction of space as of objects *in* space. Thus, linear perspectival painters do not create an architectural space that exists before the entry of the figures; rather space and the figures in these paintings always stand in a mutually dependent relation to each other. The space evoked by a perspectival construction is always an active element of the story depicted. The geometrical construction of linear perspective is one of the artistic instruments that the painter can use to tell a specific story and to move the spectators.³¹

Linear perspective was invented or discovered by the Italian engineer and architect Brunelleschi, who demonstrated his insights with

Sculpture, and for a short treatise, parallel to *On Painting*, on perspective—did not equip *On Painting* with the diagrams that would have made its densely technical first book far more accessible' Grafton does not try to solve this mystery.

³⁰ See also GRAFTON, *Leon Battista Alberti*, 97–99.

³¹ Cf. ZWIJENBERG, *The Writings and Drawings of Leonardo da Vinci*, 112–46, and see also ALBERTI, *On Painting and On Sculpture*, chapters 40 and 41.

the help of two panels painted around 1413, both of which are lost.³² The paintings depicted existing buildings in Florence: the Baptisterium and the Palazzo Vecchio. To the beholder of these paintings it seemed that he 'was seeing the true thing', to quote Brunelleschi's biographer Manetti.³³ It also becomes clear from Manetti's description of Brunelleschi's method that in using linear perspective it is necessary to determine a fixed point of view because every change in point of view will cause the eye to see different forms:³⁴ a phenomenon of which the architect Brunelleschi must have been very much aware.

It has often been pointed out that Brunelleschi developed his method for visualising different aspects of a building for his own design practice but, possibly, for his patrons as well; they would thus have the unique opportunity to 'view' the building before it was actually built.³⁵ He succeeded in giving a representation on paper or on a panel of both the visual experience of certain kinds of objects in space and the practical and measurable knowledge of these objects through geometrical construction. What used to be impossible to describe exactly in words could now be depicted clearly and unambiguously in images which in theory became accessible to every spectator. In its origin, then, linear perspective is merely a technical instrument.³⁶

Brunelleschi's perspective did not take root immediately in quattrocento painting. The reason for this is not so much that his experiments were too radical to be understood immediately; rather, it involved a case of conceptual originality. Within the art of painting as it was practised then, there was no need for complicated geometrical procedures in order to depict existing buildings. Early Renaissance artists first had to realize what possibilities the new theory opened up for them before they could use it in their artistry. Linear perspective only received its form as an artistic instrument through their search for ways of making use of these possibilities.³⁷

³² Cf. KEMP, 'Science, Non-Science and Nonsense', 134-61 and KEMP, *The Science of Art*, 9-14.

³³ MANETTI, *Vita di Brunelleschi*, 45.

³⁴ Cf. MANETTI, *Vita di Brunelleschi*, 43.

³⁵ Cf. HOLMES, *The Florentine Enlightenment*, 181.

³⁶ For more on the application of linear perspective in the technical treatises of Taccola and Francesco di Giorgio Martini as well as by Leonardo in his anatomical drawings, see ZWIJNENBERG, *The Writings and Drawings of Leonardo da Vinci*, 35-46, 122-24 and 164-74.

³⁷ Cf. KEMP, *The Science of Art*, 14-21, where he also discusses two reliefs by Donatello—*Saint George and the Dragon* (1417) *The Feast of Herod* (1425)—in which the first signs of the effect of Brunelleschi's perspective are present.

The possibilities and consequences of Brunelleschi's perspective for the art of painting are present for the first time in their entirety in the work of Masaccio, especially in his *Trinità* (c. 1426–7). Masaccio was a friend of Brunelleschi. Masaccio's *Trinità* displays what have been the two major aspects of the painterly use of linear perspective ever since: the mathematical aspect and the emotional/intellectual aspect. On the one hand, it involves the projection on a plane surface of architecture—in this case not already existent but designed beforehand—with a multiplicity of regular geometrical shapes and with the aid of a geometrical method and the assumption of a fixed point of view.³⁸ On the other hand, linear perspective is used to depict connections between the sacred and the profane and thereby to evoke the emotional meaning of the fresco. Because of the use of linear perspective in his fresco, Masaccio was forced to think about the way in which he could distinguish between the divine sphere—God, Christ, Mary and John—and the worldly domain: the two donors and the skeleton in the foreground.³⁹ In the Middle Ages, the difference between the divine and the human was expressed by a hierarchy of dimensions: divine figures were larger than ordinary mortals, which made the division in a worldly and a divine level immediately clear. Linear perspective demands spatial credibility. In the *Trinità*, God is depicted on the same scale as the human beings in a visually coherent space, and He is really *standing* behind the cross to support it. Like the human figures, the depicted God is subject to simple laws of nature such as gravity. Because of the painting's linear perspective, the spectator is no longer immediately certain about the identity of the figures depicted, or whether they belong to the divine or the human world. Masaccio realized this distinction of spheres by locating the divine realm directly behind the visual plane and by giving the donors and the skeleton a link with the world by drawing them bent forward into the space shared by the observer.⁴⁰

The use of linear perspective forces the painter to a kind of reflection (in the *Trinità* on the relation between God and man, and on the differences between the sacred and the profane) from which the medieval painter could still refrain. After all, the painter now

³⁸ For an extensive discussion of its perspectival scheme, cf. FIELD, Lunardi & Settle, 'The perspective scheme of Masaccio's *Trinity* fresco'.

³⁹ BATTISTI, *Filippo Brunelleschi*, 106.

⁴⁰ SANDSTRÖM, *Levels of Unreality*, 30. He remarked that 'Masaccio's solution is typical of that experimental fervour among the artists of Florence who were the first to tackle the central problems of perspective and explore its possibilities to the full.'

has to decide on a point of view, both spatially and emotionally, about the scene to be depicted, and this point of view becomes integral to the composition to the extent that spectators should place themselves in that position as well if they are to understand the work. Thus the painter must decide beforehand on his painting's point of view, while the beholder must make an intellectual effort to understand it. Moreover, the observer's involvement with the depicted image is basically implied.

It will be evident that the rhetorical distinction between *res* and *verba* can be applied to painting as well. It generates an understanding of the relation between the decisions of a painter to use particular means of expression and the theme he wishes to represent. There are numerous Renaissance Crucifixions or Depositions of the Cross; however, because they all differ in the way they represent these themes, as well as in the selection of gestures, expressions and attitudes, their actual meaning is never the same. The public's awareness of this distinction between theme and representation creates the sense that every theme may be represented in various ways. This interpretive space can of course only emerge if there is a set of conventions and convictions that artist and public have in common.⁴¹

The rhetorical distinction between *res* and *verba* particularly applies to linear perspectival painting, as the example of the *Trinità* demonstrates. Because of the newly possible visual coherence generated by linear perspective, the painter has to determine his own point of view vis-à-vis the story which he wishes to depict in a more radical way than in the case of non-linear perspectival painting. That is, his own personality—his personal erudition and limitations—becomes a tangible or even visible element of the painting. The viewer in turn is forced to look for a point of view from which he or she can retrieve the significance of the painting. The painting no longer inescapably radiates its meaning; instead, the spectator has to enter into a dialogue with it, as it were, in which its significance is construed. The visually coherent space of the painting thus invites the painter's intellectual and emotional reflection and an active role on the part of the spectator.

Alberti was familiar with the *Trinità* and the frescoes of Masaccio and Masolino in the Brancacci chapel in which the use of linear

⁴¹ See CICERO, *De oratore* I.iii.12: 'In oratory the very cardinal sin is to depart from the language of everyday life, and the usage approved by the sense of the community.'

perspective was completely realized. In *De Pictura* Alberti provided a theoretical framework for both aspects of linear perspective—the introduction of geometry into a painting's composition and the freedom of the artist to choose his own (intellectual and emotional) point of view. He succeeded in this so remarkably well and without the need to retreat to explanatory diagrams, because of his insight into the rhetorical distinction between *res* and *verba* as an instrument of analysis for both language and perspectival painting.

The mathematical basis of the art of painting

De Pictura's Book I is a description of the mathematical basis of the art of painting. In the first four chapters Alberti describes point, line and surface as the first elements of painting. From Chapter 5 to Chapter 19 he explains matters related to the power of vision, i.e. the properties of the visual rays (stretching between the eyes and the surface seen) and also how vision takes place by means of a pyramid of rays (the base of the pyramid is the surface seen and the sides are the visual rays, cf. Chapter 7). He further explains in detail the properties of the visual pyramid. For his description of the visual rays and pyramid Alberti relied on medieval optics. Alberti knew of the theories of geometrical vision developed by such writers as Alhazen, Roger Bacon, John Pecham and Witelo.

In Chapter 12 he raises the question what advantage his inquiry brings to the painter when painting (*pictori ad pingendum*). The answer to this question is Alberti's first real original insight in *De Pictura*: a painting is the intersection of a visual pyramid at a given distance, with a fixed centre and certain positions of lights, represented artistically with lines and colours on a given surface. He then proceeds to explain the properties of this intersection, after which he opens Chapter 19 with the following statement: 'Up to now we have explained everything in terms of the power of sight and the understanding of the intersection. But as it is relevant to know not simply what the intersection is and what it consists in but also how it can be constructed, we must now explain the art of expressing the intersection in painting.' From Chapter 19 until the end of Book I (Chapter 24) he indeed describes how the intersection can be constructed in a painting.

In the relevant scholarly literature, it is generally assumed that

Alberti gave a factual description of his method of construction which can be condensed into a number of diagrams, such as for instance Kemp's, without loss of content. This is, I believe, a reductive reading of Alberti's description, that originates in the view of linear perspective as merely a drawing trick that enables the artist to create an indifferent neutral stage on which the actors (i.e. the protagonists of the depicted story) can move without affecting its spatial structure.⁴² As I argued above, linear perspective is one of the artistic means that a painter can use to evoke emotions and in which the depicted space and figures stand in a specific and meaningful relationship to each other.

To understand Alberti's description in a more productive sense, we must take Alberti at his word when he says that he will explain the advantage of all his inquiries to the painter when painting (*pictori ad pingendum*). In that case, it cannot be ruled out beforehand that, in addition to giving a description of the construction of linear perspective, he also and simultaneously described its artistic effects and theoretical consequences which he could have seen at work in, for instance, Masaccio's *Trinità*.

A beholder of a linear perspectival painting is supposed to look at the painting from the viewpoint that is perpendicular to the centric point of the painting; the centric point is the top of the visual pyramid. This means that there is only one proper place from where 'I', the eye of the beholder, is supposed to look at the painting. The visual relationship that I as a beholder develop with the painting, which is also an emotional and intellectual relationship, is largely directed by the painting. For instance, because I do not see the floor on which Mary and Saint John are standing in Masaccio's *Trinità*, I am forced to look up to the depicted figures—that is, to the most important scene of the fresco. This visual movement of looking up causes an emotional movement. Thus, I enter the scene that is depicted from a specific emotional point of view, and I will interpret the meaning of the fresco from this emotional point of view.

In a way totally unknown to medieval art, linear perspectival art assigns a task to the beholder; it presupposes a beholder, an 'I', who is essentially contemplative, who cannot take any position without loss of contact with the painting and who cannot enter the scene from

⁴² A view propagated most of all by Ernst Gombrich in his writings on linear perspective. See for a discussion of Gombrich's view: ZWIJNENBERG, *The Writings and Drawings of Leonardo da Vinci*, 112–15 and 134–35.

any point of view she or he wishes. From the proper point of view, though, the painting almost forces me to be actively engaged in constructing a meaning of the painting. I, as a beholder, have a synthesising function: in front of a linear perspectival painting I am a subject.

Once we realize this, we cannot as readers remain indifferent to the place in Alberti's treatise where he shifts abruptly from first person plural to first person singular. In the first eighteen chapters of Book I, Alberti writes mostly in first person plural, only shifting to first person singular in places where he wants to emphasize a statement or when he wants to stress that he expresses a personal opinion or insight.⁴³ He uses first person much as we are accustomed to using it in modern academic writing. We use the first person plural as *pluralis modestiae* to avoid writing 'I', and we use 'we' to express that the author identifies the reader as belonging to the same group of scholars or experts, and to avoid indiscreet confrontation: 'As we saw in Chapter Four' has a different tone than 'As I explained in Chapter Four'. For instance, Alberti writes in Chapter 5: 'As we have explained' and 'we must first speak of'; only occasionally, as in Chapter 6, he writes: 'I do not think it is necessary here to speak of.' With the first person plural, Alberti is furthermore able to express and to emphasize the universal basis of painting (geometry) that can be shared by everyone. However, linear perspective needs an 'I' as well.

In Chapter 19, his moderate and strategic use of the first person singular changes abruptly.⁴⁴ After the opening sentence that I already quoted, Alberti exclaims: 'Let me tell you what I do when I am painting. First of all, on the surface on which I am going to paint, I draw a rectangle of whatever size I want, which I regard as an open window through which the subject to be painted is seen; and I decide how large I wish the subject to be painted to be.' A few sentences down he writes: 'Then I establish a point in the rectangle wherever I wish; and inasmuch as it occupies the place where the centric points strikes,

⁴³ For instance, Alberti repeatedly stressed the novel character of his project in first person singular, as for instance in chapter 19 (in the middle of his description of linear perspective): 'I fear it may be little understood by readers on account of the novelty of the subject . . .' Cf. Chapter 63: 'I consider it a great satisfaction to have taken the palm in this subject, as I was the first to write about this most subtle art.'

⁴⁴ In the first eighteen chapters of Book I, Alberti used on average per chapter one Latin verb form of the first person singular; in some chapters he used them not at all and never more than four times (Chapters 1, 9 and 12). In the last chapters (19–23) Latin verb forms of the first person singular are used more than sixty times.

I shall call this the centric point.' Throughout Chapter 19 until the end of Book I (Chapter 23), he continues this striking use—striking in relation to the rest of his treatise—of first person singular in all places where he explains the construction of linear perspective.

'Let me tell you what I do when I am painting. First of all, on the surface on which I am going to paint, I draw a rectangle of whatever size I want.' In using the first person singular, Alberti changed the rather didactic style of his writing into a more 'performative' style. To the reader, Alberti's statement immediately opens up a narrative space, an artist's workshop where the artist is standing before a panel, and the scene is described from the point of view of the protagonist of the story. We see what the artist sees. It is almost as if Alberti is the figure who introduces us to the story of a painting, as he describes in Chapter 42: 'Then, I like there to be someone in the "historia" who tells the spectators what is going on.'⁴⁵ If we wish to understand what the 'I' of the story wants to convey to us, we cannot do any other thing than to place ourselves in the position of 'I', to repeat 'I'. There is no other position available outside the position assigned by 'I'.

Moreover, in a text, the first person singular is a sign of the original creator of the text, and Alberti puts in a considerable effort to make this author a convincing character by adding personal details, such as in Chapter 23: 'I used to demonstrate these things at greater length to my friends', or by introducing emotion into his text. For example, at some point in his explanation in Chapter 19 Alberti introduces 'some' or 'such people', as he calls them, who have a different opinion than the author about how to establish the horizontals. With a modern sense for understatement, Alberti remarks: 'I believe they are not a little mistaken.'

However, the 'author' is only there in a negated form; time, space and subject of the text are no longer that of the author. Therefore, every reader can be or rather will become the 'author' of and in the text. The use of the first person singular places us in the position, in the point of view of the author.⁴⁶ By denouncing his oppo-

⁴⁵ Such a figure is also present in Masaccio's *Trinità*, which underlines the repeated assertion of GRAFTON, *Leon Battista Alberti*, that Alberti in his text reflected the practice of contemporary artists (143). See also the comparison between the perspective scheme of Masaccio's *Trinità* and Alberti's method in AIKEN, 'The Perspective Construction of Masaccio's *Trinity*', 43–64.

⁴⁶ Of course, in Latin texts there is no 'I' as such, but only verb-forms in first person singular. Yet I am convinced that the effect on the reader is the same as

nents, Alberti makes me, the reader, again aware of the fact that before I can go any further I need to contemplate my position in relation to the story. We are forced to be active, involved participants in the story that is being unfolded; we cannot step outside the position of the 'I', at the risk of losing contact with the story. Therefore, I as reader have a synthesizing function. Step by step Alberti describes what he is doing. In reading the report of his activities when he is painting, the reader mentally repeats these activities one after the other and in this repetition both the explanation of the construction and its artistic consequences when applied in painting take shape. It is as if Alberti in his description of the linear perspectival construction uses the mechanism of linear perspectival painting to express the new paradigm of painting in words: linear perspective assigns the spectator a place at the start, or rather at the origin of the 'view' proposed by the painting, directly in front of the point toward which its receding lines converge. The spectator is gently persuaded, if not forced, to take on an active role and interpret the painting from this point of view. In other words, the new paradigm of perspectival painting presupposes unity of form and content.

In Alberti's description of linear perspective in *De Pictura*, the form of his narrative—the story of a painter setting up a linear perspectival painting, the problems that he encounters and the emotions that are involved—perfectly fits the content: his description of perspectival construction and its artistic consequences. Obviously, illustrations would have destroyed this unity of form and content.

Alberti achieved a remarkable thing: he expressed new theoretical insights and established a new science of painting by applying concepts (such as *compositio*) and techniques from classical rhetorical tradition and from mathematics. Thus he created a new technical language for describing the process of painting—an achievement that, as we have seen, is widely acknowledged in scholarly literature. Yet most of all, he succeeded in putting something into words, which his contemporaries might have experienced already when looking at a perspectival painting like Masaccio's *Trinità*. He was able to do so simply by using the powers of language. He invented a meaningful

the use of "I" in an English text. A survey of Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* and Cicero's *De Oratore* did not reveal a discussion of the first person singular as a rhetorical writing strategy. Nor did I find in secondary literature on classical rhetoric—such as UEDING, KALIVODA and ROBLING, *Historisches Wörterbuch der Rhetorik*, and Sloane, *Encyclopedia of Rhetoric*—any relevant reference to this matter.

embedding or environment of language in which vocabulary taken from rhetoric and mathematics could convincingly perform its new function as technical language for discussing the process of painting. Furnishing new editions of *De Pictura* with explanatory diagrams integrated into the text, therefore, indicates a lack of editorial meticulousness. Illustrations fill up and flatten this new embedding. To provide illustrations reflects a misapprehension of the meaning of Alberti's seminal text.

THE UNDERWORLD OF CHAUCER'S *HOUSE OF FAME*:
VIRGIL, CLAUDIAN, AND DANTE

John Kerr

Introduction

The *House of Fame* invites its readers to draw correspondences between itself and Dante's *Commedia*.¹ Chaucer's poem makes frequent allusion to the *Commedia*, and shares with it a three-book structure. While a few scholars have attempted to see the *House of Fame* as pointing toward a transcendent reading comparable to Dante's, most agree that Chaucer resists the supernatural poetics associated with his Florentine predecessor, instead grounding the *House of Fame* in the experience of the earthly.² Such a view of the poem taps into the *House of Fame*'s larger concern with the instability of human language and thought, a crisis which the poem never surrenders.³ By the end of the poem Chaucer depicts the passage of knowledge—fame—as an inevitable blending of true and false ('fals and soth compouned').⁴ I shall be showing how the poem's emphasis on epistemological uncertainty hinges upon a particular conception of underworld which Chaucer inherited from classical and medieval lore. Specifically,

¹ For Chaucer's relationship with Dante in the *House of Fame* and in his other poems, see the bibliography provided in KRUGER, 'Imagination and the Complex Movement of Chaucer's *House of Fame*,' n. 13, as well as SYPHERD, *Studies in Chaucer's House of Fame*, 44–72; FYLER, *Chaucer and Ovid*, 23–64; SHOAF, *Dante, Chaucer, and the Currency of the Word*; BOITANI, *Chaucer and the Imaginary World of Fame*; NEUSE, *Chaucer's Dante*; CHANCE, *The Mythographic Chaucer*, 45–82; SHOAF, 'Noon English Digne'; FRANKE, 'Enditynges of Worldly Vanitees'; STEINBERG, 'Chaucer in the Field of Cultural Production.'

² For the exceptions, see particularly KOONCE, *Chaucer and the Tradition of Fame*, and PAYNE, *The Influence of Dante*.

³ For the classic study on this crisis see DELANEY, *Chaucer's 'House of Fame'*. Along with the texts cited in n. 1 above and in KRUGER, 'Imagination and the Complex Movement of Chaucer's *House of Fame*,' n. 3, see also EDWARDS, *The Dream of Chaucer*, 93–121; KISER, *Truth and Textuality in Chaucer's Poetry*; TERRELL, 'Reallocation of Hermeneutic Authority'; MCGERR, *Chaucer's Open Books*; LYNCH, *Chaucer's Philosophical Visions*, 61–82; ST. JOHN, *Chaucer's Dream Visions*, 63–123.

⁴ *House of Fame* II.129. All quotations from Chaucer are taken from *The Riverside Chaucer*.

'underworld' meant for Chaucer the entire region below the sphere of the moon, the realm of uncertainty and incessant change which was ruled by the goddess Proserpina. In examining Chaucer's poem as an infernal project, I will begin with a consideration of his explicit references to Virgil, Claudian, and Dante as authorities on hell in Books I and III, then move on to discuss Chaucer's conception of underworld (with particular attention to Proserpina), and conclude with a close reading of the *House of Fame* that hinges upon an intertextual relationship with Dante's *Inferno*. These brief forays will provide a sense of the sources, themes, and depth of Chaucer's infernal undertaking, as well as the prominent position of Dante at every step.

Virgil, Claudian, and Dante as authorities on hell

The *House of Fame* manifests its resistance to closure from the outset. In the proem to Book I, the narrator, 'Geffrey', withholds any conclusive judgment on the causes of dreams, as well as their variety of potential interpretations: 'For I of noon opinion/Nyl as now make mensyon' (I.55-56). Instead, he proceeds to invoke Morpheus, 'the god of slep,' for assistance in retelling his dream (I.69). This invocation serves a comic enough purpose, but also lays an infernal groundwork, since Morpheus is said to dwell 'in a cave of stoon/Upon a strem that cometh fro Lete,/That is a flood of helle unswete' (I.69-71). As this invocation governs the poetic retelling of the dream experience, it implies a hellish genesis not only for Geffrey's dream, but also for the poem as a whole.⁵

Throughout Geffrey's dream journey, the *House of Fame* establishes itself as a self-consciously literary poem. Book I sets this literary tone in an unparalleled way, plunging Geffrey into a dream world where he encounters Virgil's *Aeneid* written on a tablet of brass. Chaucer provides a narrative synopsis of Virgil's epic which dedicates all but 17 lines to the first six books, focusing attention on the story of Dido. Chaucer complicates the Dido account by bringing in the perspective of Ovid's *Heroides*. After lengthily evoking Dido's words and

⁵ This alignment of Geffrey's dream with hell may be underlined by the poem's unusual setting, which has never been sufficiently explained: the dream occurs not in the characteristic May time of re-greening, but instead on December 10, approaching the death of winter.

actions during her final hours, Chaucer directs the reader to Virgil and Ovid for further details:

And al the maner how she deyde
 And alle the wordes that she seyde,
 Whoso to knowe hit hath purpos,
 Rede Virgile in Eneydos
 Or the Epistle of Ovyde,
 What that she wrot or that she dyde;
 And nere hyt to long to endyte,
 Be God, I wolde hyt here write.
 (I.375–382)

This deferral to 'Virgile in Eneydos/Or the Epistle of Ovyde' most overtly allows Chaucer to position himself within an unstable literary tradition of the Dido story. Dido's concerns about the fame surrounding her affair with Aeneas are underscored by the contrasting versions of her fame as preserved by poets, to which canon Chaucer now adds himself.⁶

While this deferral to Virgil and Ovid has been much remarked, attention has not been so freely lavished upon the parallel deferral which comes several lines later in Book I. Here, speaking of Aeneas' journey to the underworld in *Aeneid* VI, Geoffrey stops short of describing hell's pains, instead referring the reader to Virgil, Claudian, and Dante:

And also sawgh I how Sybile
 And Eneas, besyde an yle,
 To helle wente for to see
 His fader, Anchyses the free;
 How he ther fond Palinurus,
 And Dido, and eke Deiphebus;
 And every turment eke in helle
 Saugh he, which is longe to telle;
 Which whoso willeth for to knowe,
 He moste rede many a rowe
 On Virgile or on Claudian,
 Or Daunte, that hit telle kan.
 (I.439–450)

⁶ Chaucer self-consciously includes himself in the authorities on Dido by having Geoffrey take credit for part of the story as related in the *House of Fame*: 'In suche wordes gan to pleyne/Dido of her grete peyne,/As me mette redely-/Non other auctour alegge I' (I.314).

Chaucer once again situates himself in a canon of contrasting authorities. Claudian's presentation of the underworld differs markedly from Virgil's, and Dante's system is, of course, a wholesale re-configuring. Thus, this deferral, like the earlier one, serves the poem's larger goal of destabilizing authority and surrendering literature to the uncertainty of human epistemology: 'The excessive 'profusion of authorities' cancels authority out, and the status of the poem, by implication, degenerates to rumor by the end.'⁷ Moreover, Chaucer underscores this authorial instability by misrepresenting Virgil's own account of Aeneas' infernal journey. It is not accurate that Aeneas saw 'every turment . . . in helle.' Rather, Virgil makes a point of having Aeneas *not see* most of hell's torments; his hero must instead rely upon what the Sybil can tell him about this realm from her prior experience.⁸

It may be noted that Chaucer links the two deferrals of Book I through parallel constructions: 'Whoso to knowe [more] hath purpose' (I.377; cf. 447) must turn to other authors, because the rest of the story 'is longe to telle' (I.446; cf. 381). More importantly, there is a contextual link between the two passages in the experience of death and the afterlife. The first authorial deferral occurs at the end of the lengthy passage concentrated on Dido's suffering and death; the second deferral leads the reader to the underworld (where Dido reappears). Chaucer draws a correspondence between earthly and infernal experience.⁹ Characteristically, he focuses on romantic tragedy in making this association, amplifying Dido's hellish suffering with a 44-line section devoted to tragic lovers. Within this catalogue (which is concentrated on suffering and death), Theseus gets most attention, and it is worth noting that the narrator consigns him to hell: 'The devel be hys soules bane!' (I.408).¹⁰

⁷ FRANKE, 'Enditynges of Worldly Vanitees,' 90-91.

⁸ The Sybil tells Aeneas, ' . . . no innocent can cross these cursed thresholds;/but when the goddess Hecate made me the guardian of Avernus' groves, then she/ revealed the penalties the gods decreed/and guided me through all the halls of hell.' See *The Aeneid of Virgil*, tr. Mandelbaum, 157.

⁹ Chance also follows up on the infernal presentation of Dido in Book I, suggesting that 'Of the two meetings of Aeneas and Dido in the *Aeneid*, Chaucer in the *Hous of Fame* is more interested in the meeting of the hero and the shade in the gloomy sixth book rather than in the passionate fourth book.' CHANCE, *The Mythographic Chaucer*, 45.

¹⁰ One can further perceive Book I's concern with the underworld through its synopsis of the *Aeneid*: after the presentation of Dido and the other doomed lovers, the summary resumes with the death of Palinurus and Aeneas' trip to the underworld (where he sees again Palinurus and Dido). Chaucer then dismisses the final

This interest in hell resurfaces overtly in Book III. Here, while Geoffrey is touring Fame's house, he encounters a series of statues which displays a host of literary greats, including historians of 'Jewes gestes' (III.1434), Statius, Homer and other writers of the matter of Troy, Virgil, Ovid, and Lucan. The portrayal of this canon, which again destabilizes authority through its multiplicity, further undercuts literary truth value by suggesting the in-fighting amongst Chaucer's predecessors, who accuse each other of lying.¹¹ The list of statues culminates in the image of Claudian:

And next [Lucan] on a piler stood
 Of soulfre, lyk as he were wood,
 Daun Claudian, the sothe to telle,
 That bar up al the fame of helle,
 Of Pluto, and of Proserpyne,
 That quene ys of the derke pyne.
 (III.1507-1512)

While Claudian is rarely discussed these days, he was a standard and major figure for medieval writers. His *De Raptu Proserpinae* was, in fact, part of the medieval schoolboy's curriculum.¹² Chaucer mentions him explicitly in the *House of Fame*, the *Legend of Good Women*, and the *Canterbury Tales*, citing him in both the *House of Fame* and the *Merchant's Tale* as his authority on the goddess Proserpina.¹³

Claudian's final position in the literary canon of the *House of Fame*, with the emphasis placed upon hell, might be seen to accord the underworld a special status in Chaucer's poem. Indeed, it has been argued that the authorial catalogue displays the trajectory of literature into hell.¹⁴ Just as Geoffrey anchors his dream in hell by invoking

six books of the epic with a meager 17 lines and very little specificity of action. Clearly, the interest here is in the events that culminate in the underworld.

¹¹ TERRELL writes, 'This portrayal of the perpetual conflict of literary authority throughout the ages further dissolves the notion that literary authority can bear any relation to truth.' See 'Reallocation of Hermeneutic Authority,' 286.

¹² See CLAUDIAN, *De Raptu Proserpinae*, ed. J.B. Hall, 68ff.

¹³ See *Canterbury Tales* IV.2225-2233 and *Legend of Good Women* G 280. For Chaucer's reception of Claudian, see PRATT, 'Chaucer's Claudian'.

¹⁴ See ROWLAND, 'Bishop Bradwardine, the Artificial Memory, and the *House of Fame*,' 48. Rowland speaks of classical literature specifically, but we shouldn't be satisfied with this limitation, as the list of authors clearly includes moderns. And as I have suggested, the last line clearly links hell and modern literature, evoking as it does Dante's *Inferno*. See also McCALL, who writes, 'The architectural and allegorical plan [of the statues] creates a thoughtfully ambiguous effect. It gives a grand impression in its sweeping history and catalogue of the illustrious, but it also manifests a perverse comic message: first because of the uncertain *standing* of any

Morpheus in Book I, so here Chaucer makes a similar move by suggesting the infernal destination of literature. His poem comes from and will return to the nether regions.¹⁵

As opposed to Book I, in which Virgil and Dante share the dubious honor of authorities on the underworld, here it appears to be Claudian alone who bears up 'al the fame of helle.' Virgil and Dante, however, both lie below the surface of the allusion to the *De Raptu Proserpinae*. Chaucer's choice to depict Claudian's Proserpina as the 'quene . . . of the derke pyne' recalls Dante's reference to the goddess in *Inferno* as the 'regina dell' eterno pianto' ('queen of the endless lamentation').¹⁶ Dante's phrase is in turn indebted to Virgil's presentation of Proserpina-Hecate in the *Aeneid* as queen of heaven and hell.¹⁷ One may still wonder, though, why Chaucer—who introduced Virgil and Dante earlier as infernal authorities, and who in Book III has no reservations about citing multiple authorities on the matter of Troy—now singles out Claudian. With this gesture, Chaucer was able to focus attention on Proserpina, whose role in the poem turns out to have wider significance. A brief consideration of the medieval Proserpina will help clarify what 'underworld' meant to Chaucer, and will help to organize the poem's chaos.

Chaucer's conception of underworld

For a modern reader, the terms 'underworld,' 'infernal,' and 'hell' are likely to evoke a religious notion of a realm within the earth, that world below the surface to which the deceased pass on for punishment. In the following pages, I will limit that idea to the term 'hell.' Chaucer inherited a much more complex conception of underworld, one rooted in classical literature and philosophy and which was carried into the

fame . . . and second, because of the 'narrative' order of the construction which moves from 'Jewerye' to 'Romes myghty werkes,' only to end suspiciously in hell.' *Chaucer Among the Gods*, 54.

¹⁵ I am preceded in my suggestion that Geffrey remains in the underworld throughout the poem by Jane Chance and Christopher Baswell. CHANCE writes, 'At the end of the *Hous of Fame*, then, 'Geffrey' is back in the underworld of Morpheus, plagued by phantoms and images.' See *The Mythographic Chaucer*, 81. Similarly, BASWELL locates Geffrey's flight in 'the underworld as the world itself.' See *Virgil in Medieval England*, 243.

¹⁶ *Inferno* IX.44.

¹⁷ See *The Aeneid of Virgil*, tr. Mandelbaum, 147, as well as note 8 above.

Middle Ages. While the 'infernal' could signify 'hell' narrowly, it referred more generally to all the space below the moon, as can be seen in the following passage from Bernardus Silvestris' commentary on Martianus Capella's *De Nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*:

Moreover, some have divided the world into two parts. That which is above the moon they call the region of the pious because they believe souls to live there after leaving their bodies. But they call that sublunar region, where all living things are fallen, the infernal realm.¹⁸

Dante, in his *Commedia*, asserts that he was able to traverse the sphere of the moon, to 'trasumanar' ('go beyond the human world') and enter the realm of the pious.¹⁹ In Book II of the *House of Fame*, Chaucer goes to substantial efforts to deny Geoffrey travel beyond the human realm. Rather than pass into the heavens where Jove can 'stellyfy' him, he remains below the moon (II.586). Moreover, his eagle guide claims,

... half so high as this
 Nas Alixandre Macedo;
 Ne the kyng, Daun Scipio,
 That saw in drem, at poynt devys,
 Helle and erthe and paradys.
 (II.914-918)

Along with Alexander and Scipio, Chaucer lampoons the flights of Romulus, Aeneas, Dedalus and Icarus, and Enoch and Elijah. Chaucer drives home the epistemological limitation implied in this underachievement by evoking Plato, Aristotle, and Boethius, whose philosophic flights he similarly deflates.²⁰ The *House of Fame* is a dramatic statement that Chaucer's poetry will embrace and remain loyal to the complexities of the sublunar world of human thought.

An understanding of the goddess Proserpina, the last figure to be mentioned in the canonized authors of *House of Fame III*, clarifies the relationship between the narrower and broader conceptions of underworld. Classical and late-antique writers established Proserpina as a

¹⁸ 'Alii autem mundum in duas regiones partiti. Superlunarem regionem piorum dixerunt quia ibi corporibus exute vivere creduntur. Sublunarem vero regionem cuius omnia animantia caduca sunt inferos dixerunt.' BERNARDUS SILVESTRIS, *The Commentary on Martianus Capella's De nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*, 116. Translation mine.

¹⁹ See *Paradiso* I.70. Translation mine.

²⁰ Cf. II.759, 925-931, 972-978. Given that Chaucer models his eagle upon the *aguglia* from *Purgatorio*, Dante is clearly a primary target of this bringing down to earth. See *Purgatorio* IX, 13-42.

lunar goddess reigning over the changing sublunar realm. For example, when in Book II of Claudian's *De Raptu Proserpinae* Pluto ravishes the unsuspecting Proserpina to the world below, he attempts to console her by describing to her the dowry she has won:

... whatever the clear air embraces, whatever the earth feeds, whatever the sea plains swirl round, what the rivers sweep along, what the marshes have nourished—all living things alike shall yield to your sovereignty, *all that lies beneath the sphere of the moon*, which is the seventh planet enclosing the earth's atmosphere and separating things mortal from the eternal stars.²¹

As Pluto's wife, Proserpina becomes the queen over all that lies beneath the sphere of the moon.²²

Since all sublunar creatures are subject to mortality, the goddess's reign incorporates the entire range from hell to the moon. So it is that Proserpina is understood to be the moon itself, as we see in the *Ovide Moralisé*, which ascribes to her not only the seasonal and hellish elements more familiar to the modern reader, but also interprets Proserpina's cyclical descent as the descent of the moon:

Pluto signifies the earth, and Proserpina, who was lady and queen of the infernal realm, is able to denote the moon and grain. Ceres' daughter was lost because when the moon is sunk below the earth, it seems to be lost.²³

This conception of the lunar Proserpina was standard in medieval mythography. In fact, the goddess was understood to be a tripartite figure: Proserpina or Hecate as the queen of the underworld; Diana as the goddess of the forest and hunt; and Luna or Lucina as the moon (also called Proserpina or Hecate). This formulation comes up again and again, as we find in Vatican Mythographer II: 'For the same goddess is Luna in heaven, Diana on earth, Proserpina in Erebus.'²⁴ The goddess's lunar role was linked with her underworld

²¹ CLAUDIAN, *De raptu Proserpinae*, tr. Gruzelier, 43 (my emphasis).

²² Claudian has already foreshadowed Proserpina's larger role by comparing the girl to a calf 'whose newly budding horns have not yet curved in a moon over her forehead.' See CLAUDIAN, *De raptu Proserpinae*, tr. Gruzelier, 11.

²³ 'Pluto la terre [signifie], et Proserpine,/Qui d'enfer fu dame et roïne,/Puet noter la lune et l'ablee./Ceres fu sa fille emblee,/Quar, quant la lune est repondue/Sous terre, el samble estre perdue.' *Ovide Moralisé en prose*, ed. BOER, 237, ll. 2788–2793.

²⁴ BODE, *Scriptores rerum mythicarum*, 79, and cf. 3, 36, 83, and 198 for the same

role, as evident in the *Ovide Moralisé* above, because the moon alternates its appearance above and below the horizon.²⁵

Dante shows his adoption of this goddess in the *Commedia*. In *Inferno* IX he refers to 'the queen of endless lamentation,' focusing on her hellish aspect. In the next canto, however, Farinata foretells the pilgrim's political future by speaking of this infernal ruler as the moon:

Ma non cinquanta volte fia raccesa
la faccia de la donna che qui regge,
che tu saprai quanto quell' arte pesa.

['But the face of the lady reigning here {i.e., the moon} will be rekindled not fifty times before you too shall know how difficult a skill that is to learn.']²⁶

Chaucer makes clear his own employment of the tripartite Proserpina in the *Knight's Tale*. His depiction of 'Dyane' articulates the triple range of the goddess:

This goddesse on an hert ful hye seet,
With smale houndes al about hir feet,
And undernethe hir feet she had a moone-
Wexyng it was and sholde wanye soon.
In gaude grene hir statue clothed was,
With bowe in honde and arwes in a cas.
Hir eyen caste she ful lowe adoun
Ther Pluto hath his derke regioun.²⁷

Similarly, in the *Franklin's Tale*, the lover Aurelius prays to the sun for help from his sister moon, who holds her lower reign in the 'dark region' with Pluto:

articulation in *Vatican Mythographers* I and III. Translations from Bode are mine. The copy of Claudian's *De raptu Proserpinae* contained in Biblioteca Ambrosiana MS I 26 sup. includes a marginal gloss on Proserpina: 'Luna in cielo/Diana in terra/Proserpina apud inferos' ('Luna in heaven, Diana on earth, Proserpina in the infernal realm'). Such citations, some of which are given below, could be multiplied dramatically.

²⁵ See also *Vatican Mythographer* I: 'Proserpina ipsa est et luna, quae toto anno sex mensibus crescit, sex deficit, scilicet per singulos menses quindenis diebus; ut crescens apud superos, et deficiens apud inferos videatur.' ('Proserpina herself is the moon, which out of the whole year waxes for six months and wanes for six, namely for fifteen days apiece each month; so that waxing she appears among the upper regions, while waning she appears among the lower.')

²⁶ *Inferno* X.79-81. Quotations from *Inferno* are taken from DANTE, *Inferno*, tr. Robert and Jean Hollander.

²⁷ *Canterbury Tales*, I.2075-2086.

I seye, preyeth your suster that she go
 No faster cours than ye thise yeres two.
 Thanne shal she been evene atte fulle alway

...

Prey hire to synken every rok adoun
 Into hir owene dirke regioun
 Under the ground, ther Pluto dwelleth inne,
 Or nevere mo shal I my lady winne.²⁸

Thus, when Proserpina appears at the end of catalogued authors in the *House of Fame*, her resonance for Chaucer would be rich. To be sure, her overt function is to evoke the pains of hell, a terrible aura which taints the poem as a whole, most notably in Book I where Aeneas' 'pyne' is evoked, and where Dido continually *complains* about her *pain*. The terms 'peyne,' 'pleyne,' and 'pyne'—constellated around Proserpina via Virgil, Claudian, and especially Dante—will provide Chaucer with a vocabulary he will employ again and again to describe the experience of the world. In particular, he will link these words with the psychological state of his lovers. Most notably, one might recall the sorrow of Troilus, whose infernal catharsis leads him to exclaim, 'but down with Proserpyne,/Whan I am ded, I wol go wone in pyne,/And ther I wol eternaly compleyne . . .,' again recalling Dante's 'eterno pianto' in the context of Proserpina.²⁹ We can understand more fully now why Ovid, who is held up as the authority on love *par excellence* in *House of Fame* III, becomes yoked with Virgil, Claudian, and Dante through the parallel deferrals of Book I (and why Book I takes place in the temple of Venus). Put succinctly, in Chaucer's poetry love is hell.³⁰

While Proserpina's hellish aspect comes to the fore in the *House of Fame*, her Dianan and Lunar sides are also operative. In Book I, these facets of the goddess emerge primarily through the character of Dido à la Virgil. In the *Aeneid*, Dido's Carthage follows the fashion of Diana. Thus, when Aeneas first sees his mother Venus in the forest near Carthage, she is dressed like Diana, even being mistaken by Aeneas for 'Apollo's sister'.³¹ When the ill-fated Dido herself enters the *Aeneid*, she is depicted as a very Diana:

²⁸ *Canterbury Tales*, V.1066–1069, 1072–1075.

²⁹ *Troilus and Criseyde*, IV.473–475.

³⁰ So it is that in the *Parliament of Fowls*, to pick just one example, the narrator enters the garden of lovers through a gate modeled on the gate of Dante's hell. See *Parliament of Fowls*, 120–140.

³¹ See *The Aeneid of Virgil*, tr. Mandelbaum, 12. Chaucer writes that Aeneas encoun-

And just as, on the banks of the Eurotas
 or through the heights of Cynthus, when Diana
 incites her dancers, and her followers,
 a thousand mountain-nymphs, press in behind her,
 she wears a quiver slung across her shoulder;
 and as she makes her way, she towers over
 all other goddesses; gladness excites
 Latona's silent breast: even so, Dido;
 so, in her joy, she moved among the throng
 as she urged on the work of her coming kingdom.³²

Eventually, Dido in her suffering calls upon the powers of the 'tria virginis ora Dianae' (the triple-shaped Diana, three-faced virgin'), an appellation which medieval mythographers frequently picked up on in their articulation of the tripartite goddess.³³ Moreover, Dido makes her appeal to Diana as an enchantress while gathering herbs by moonlight, fulfilling the lunar facet of the goddess by evoking the association between the moon and black magic.³⁴

Since Dido dies an early death not warranted by fate, she does not immediately depart to the lower world: 'Proserpina/had not yet cut a gold lock from her crown.'³⁵ When Dido does descend to the underworld, however, she again manifests the three aspects of the tripartite goddess. She now exists in the infernal realm narrowly speaking (Proserpinan), she dwells in a forest (Dianan), and when Aeneas meets up with her she appears as a young moon (Lunar):

And when the Trojan hero recognized her
 dim shape among the shadows (just as one
 who either sees or thinks he sees among
 the cloud banks, when the month is young, the moon
 rising), he wept . . .³⁶

ters Venus 'Goynge in a queynt array/As she had been an hunteresse' (*House of Fame* I.228-229).

³² *The Aeneid of Virgil*, tr. Mandelbaum, 18

³³ *The Aeneid of Virgil*, tr. Mandelbaum, 100. Isidore of Seville writes, 'De qua Vergilius . . . Tria virginis ora Dianae, quia eadem Luna, eadem Diana, eadem Proserpina vocatur' ('Concerning which Virgil writes . . . The three faces of the virgin Diana, because the same goddess is called Luna, Diana, and Proserpina'). See ISIDORI HISPALENSIS EPISCOPI, *Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, VIII.11.57. Cf. BODE, *Scriptores rerum mythicarum* 36.

³⁴ See *The Aeneid of Virgil*, tr. Mandelbaum, 100. Dante exploits this tradition by concluding his infernal canto on the diviners with a reference to the full moon under which his poem began. See *Inferno* XX.124-130.

³⁵ *The Aeneid of Virgil*, tr. Mandelbaum, 106.

³⁶ *The Aeneid of Virgil*, tr. Mandelbaum, 153. It may be, in fact, that Chaucer

Dido thus serves Chaucer's purposes perfectly. As a literary character constantly subject to the shifting perspectives of poetic genealogy, she points up the instability of human thought. And as a figure who was intimately and ironically linked with the three-faced goddess Proserpina-Diana-Luna, she helps Chaucer in grounding his poem's sublunar range.

I have already suggested that Book II of the *House of Fame* is very much invested in establishing this sublunar poetic milieu. If Book I focuses on Dido's hellish sufferings, and Book II finds Geoffrey being carried through the air beneath the moon, where then does Book III take the reader? One may fruitfully draw out the parallel with Dante's *Commedia*, which also begins hellishly, ascends through the heights of Purgatory, and brings Dante beyond the human to the moon. For the moment, I will defer in-depth discussion of the relationship between the *House of Fame* and the *Commedia*, which turns out to be a more profoundly infernal one than usually recognized. I now want to continue the apparent trajectory, which Chaucer is happy to exploit, toward the moon.

While Book III of the *House of Fame* does not lead precisely to the moon, it does bring Geoffrey to the house of Fame, a figure clearly modeled on medieval conceptions of the moon. Fame is sister to Fortune, a lunar figure *par excellence* because of her incessant turning and instability.³⁷ More importantly, Fame's judgments are random like those of Fortune. She grants some suppliants their requests, others the exact opposite. Some want to be remembered and won't be; some want to be remembered and will be. Of those who don't want to be remembered at all, she grants some oblivion, but saddles others with memory in the collective consciousness. Unlike the judgments of God in Dante's *Paradiso*, Fame's pronouncements seem to follow no moral code. Saints and sinners alike are remembered or forgotten with no clear basis of selection. The lunar character of Fame's judgments becomes explicit at one point:

Thus out at holes gunne wringe
Every tydyngre streght to Fame,

yokes Dido's hellish suffering with her lunar nature by punning on the words *mone* and *moone*: 'But that is done, is not to done;/Al hir compleynt ne al hir moone/Certeyn, avayleth hir not a stre' (I.361-363; my emphasis).

³⁷ See LEWIS, *The Discarded Image*, 108-109. Cf. *Paradiso* XVI, 82-84, where Dante connects the instability of Fortune with the moon's incessant changing of the tides.

And she gan yeven ech hys name,
 After hir disposicioun,
 And yaf hen eke duracioun,
 Somme to wexe and wane sone
 As doth the faire white mone.
 (III.2110–2216)

It is also clear that those begging for fame come from the sublunar realm: '... ther com entryng into the halle/A ryght gret company withalle,/And that of sondry regions,/Of alleskynnes condiciouns/That dwelle in erthe under the mone' (1527–1531). Indeed, just as Claudian's Proserpina rules over heaven and earth and sea (from the sphere of the moon downward), so Fame's palace stands 'Ryght even in myddes of the weye/Betwixen hevne and erthe and see' (II.711–712).³⁸ While Chaucer does not allow his Geffrey to 'tra-sumanar' like Dante in the sphere of the moon, it is clear that the forces that influence instability in the sublunar underworld are precisely at issue in Book III.

Ultimately, what Chaucer provides his reader in the *House of Fame* is a picture of the ever-changing world of the human, the incessant and hellish frenzy of uncertainty in the mortal world below the moon. I have suggested that Chaucer articulated this sublunar environment with the tripartite goddess Proserpina at the forefront of his mind. Not only would this goddess be a natural association for Chaucer when considering this region (as he shows in the *Knight's Tale* and *Franklin's Tale*, for example), but Proserpina would gain him significant mileage for the poem's concerns with epistemology. Medieval commentators saw Proserpina as a figure of philosophy because of the range of her domain. Thus, the anonymous commentary on the *Aeneid* preserved in manuscripts Ambrosiana G 111 inf. and British Harley 4946 suggests:

But concerning the golden bough we also say: through Proserpina we should understand the moon, under which all mutable and fallen things are contained. When Aeneas descends in contemplation for the sake of perceiving these things, he fixes the golden bough to the posts of Proserpina, because when this contemplation arrives at the moon, he sees there the termination and end of those things concerning which

³⁸ Likely enough, Chaucer again brings things down to earth with reference to Dante: 'in myddes of the weye' can hardly fail to recall the opening earthly/infernal setting of the *Commedia*, 'Nel mezzo del cammin' (*Inferno* I.1).

he is able to know and do in a full way. For those things which are above the moon exceed not only the eloquence of humanity, but also its knowledge.³⁹

Rather than attempt to soar poetically above the chaos of human instability, Chaucer embraced the Proserpinan world. He saw a close connection between the narrower concept of 'hell,' with all its torment, and the broader human underworld, whose members (and particularly its lovers) are constantly moving 'up and down' without rest or assurance.

Intertextual relationship with Dante's Inferno

I have suggested that Virgil, Ovid, Claudian, and Dante are essential to the *House of Fame* in providing an infernal genealogy for Chaucer's sublunar enterprise. Chaucer was especially interested in Dante as a poet of hell, and used him repeatedly to draw this parallel between the lesser and greater meanings of underworld. I would like to close by offering an intertextual reading of the *House of Fame* which depends not upon a linkage with *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*, but rather derives from *Inferno* I, II, and III. Through this ongoing conversation with Dante's hell, Chaucer brings the *Commedia* back to earth, and by focusing attention upon the narrower hell, bids his reader see earth as underworld.

³⁹ 'Vel aliter de ramo aureo dicamus: per Proserpinam lunam intelligamus sub qua quecumque continentur mutabilia sunt et caduca. Ad hec percipienda dum Eneas descendisset consideracione, tandem ramum aureum Proserpina postibus affixit quia dum usque ad lunam hec consideracio pervenisset, vidit ibi terminari et finem habere ea de quibus plenarie eciam scire et fari posset. Illa enim que supra lunam sunt non solum hominis eloquenciam verum eciam scienciam excedunt.' JONES, Jr., *An Aeneid Commentary of Mixed Type*, 181-182 (translation mine). The reasons for this association between Proserpina and philosophy are complicated, and will be the matter of a separate article. Most importantly, Fulgentius inaugurated a tradition of the goddess as memorial/philosophical goddess by allegorizing her golden bough as philosophy and equating the goddess herself with memory: 'As Proserpine is queen of the lower world, so the queen of knowledge is memory, which as it advances reigns forever supreme in liberated minds.' *Fulgentius the Mythographer*, 131-132. Later medieval commentaries on the *Aeneid* preserved and developed these connections. Cf. the commentary attributed to Bernardus Silvestris: 'The altar of this goddess is the posterior cell of memory . . . And therefore it is said that this branch [the golden bough] is sacred to this goddess since in that cell philosophy is entrusted to memory.' BERNARDUS SILVESTRIS, *Commentary on the First Six Books of the Aeneid*, 32.

Just as the sleepy Dante encounters Virgil and recalls the *Aeneid* in *Inferno* I, so in *House of Fame* I the sleeping Geoffrey enters the dream world and encounters Virgil's *Aeneid*.⁴⁰ Geoffrey ends up in Book I on a sandy waste that has been read as corresponding to the 'gran deserto' of *Inferno* I.⁴¹ Here Geoffrey expresses his lost state (like Dante in *Inferno* I), and anxiously wishes to be saved from 'fantome and illusion,' comically paralleling Dante's fear of the beasts and his salvation at the hands of a figure who is, after all, a shade.⁴² And just as Virgil comes to help Dante out of the 'gran deserto,' so the eagle descends to take Geoffrey away.

The opening of *House of Fame* II incorporates Dante's famous invocation at the opening of *Inferno* II:

O Thought, that wrot al that I mette,
 And in the tresorye hyt shette
 Of my brayn, now shal men se
 Yf any vertu in the be
 To tellen al my drem aryght
 Now kythe thyn engyn and myght!⁴³
 (II.523–528)

In *Inferno* II, Dante expresses his reservations about the journey ahead, saying 'Io non Enëa, io non Paulo sono' ('I am not Aeneas, nor am I Paul').⁴⁴ Similarly, Geoffrey suggests, 'I neyther am Ennok, ne Elye,/ Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede' (II.588–589). Chaucer's eagle then becomes rather Virgilian, calming Geoffrey by explaining his mission, echoing Virgil's response to Dante's cowardice:

But er I bere the moche ferre,
 I wol the telle what I am,
 and whider thou shalt, and why I cam
 To do thys, so that thou take
 Good herte, and not for fere quake.⁴⁵
 (II.600–604)

⁴⁰ See *Inferno* I.11, where Dante says he entered the wood 'pien di sonno' ('full of sleep'), and I.61ff. for his meeting with Virgil.

⁴¹ *Inferno* I.64, and cf. I.29. See *The Riverside Chaucer*, 981, note to lines 482–488, on this and alternate interpretations of the 'feld . . . of sond.'

⁴² See *Inferno* I.64–66 and 88–90 for Virgil as shade and for Dante's cries for help.

⁴³ See *Inferno* II.7–9: 'O Muse, o alto ingegno, or m'aiutate;/o mente che scriviesti ciò ch'io vidi,/qui si parrà la tua nobilitate' ('O Muses, O lofty genius, aid me now! O memory, that set down what I saw, here shall your worth be shown').

⁴⁴ *Inferno* II.32.

⁴⁵ See *Inferno* II.49–51: 'Da questa tema a ciò che tu ti solve,/dirotti perch'io

The eagle has come to perform all of Jove's 'comaundement' (II.611), just as Virgil has approached Dante to carry out Beatrice's 'comandamento'.⁴⁶ Chaucer pits *House of Fame* II's comically intellectual eagle against the rational Virgil, master of rhetorical sublimity. The eagle deflates the power of speech by explaining its nature as mere air, and himself becomes a humorously anti-Virgilian figure of non-rhetorical speech:

Telle me this now feythfully,
 Have y not preved thus simply,
 Withoute any subtilite
 Of speche, or grete prolixite
 Of termes of philosophie,
 Of figures of poetrie,
 Or colours of rhetorike?
 (II.853–859)

In contrast with the master of the high tragic style, who was called upon by Beatrice because of his 'parola ornata' ('polished words') and 'parlare onesto' ('noble speech'), the eagle can 'Lewedly to a lewd man/Speke' (II.866–867).⁴⁷

As Dante in *Inferno* III arrives at Hell proper, so in *House of Fame* III Geoffrey comes to the House of Fame. Chaucer parodies the divine and eternal construction of Dante's gate of hell, by placing Fame's palace on a rock of ice. In *Inferno* III, Dante struggles to understand the words inscribed on hell's gate, because they are 'duro', a word which expresses 'hard to understand', but also repeats the 'duro' of the gate's eternal artisanship.⁴⁸ Geoffrey, on the other hand, has difficulty literally reading the names on the rock of ice, because some of the letters have melted. After witnessing the random judgments of Fame, Geoffrey finally comes to the house of twigs, which perpetually whirls and emits 'so gret a noyse' (III.1927), just as the crowd of unachievers in *Inferno* III make a horrible tumult which always whirls.⁴⁹ Geoffrey sees a multitude of shades, whose vast num-

venni e quel ch'io 'ntesi/nel primo punto che di te mi dolse' ('To free you from this fear/I'll tell you why I came and what I heard/when first I felt compassion for you').

⁴⁶ *Inferno* II.79.

⁴⁷ *Inferno* II.67 and 113.

⁴⁸ See *Inferno* III.1–12.

⁴⁹ See *Inferno* III.28–30: '... facevano un tumulto, il qual s'aggira/semprè in quell' aura senza tempo tinta,/come la rena quando turbo spira' ('all these made a tumult, always whirling/in that black and timeless air, as sand is swirled in a whirlwind').

ber spurs the narrator to allude to Dante's surprise in *Inferno* III that 'death had undone so many.'⁵⁰ Chaucer one-ups Dante, having his Geoffrey witness more shades than people living *or* dead:

But which a congregacioun
Of folk, as I saugh rome aboute,
Some wythin and some wythoute,
Nas never seen, ne shal ben eft;
That, certys, in the world nys left
So many formed be Nature,
Ne ded so many a creature.
(III.2034–2040)

Finally, the mysterious 'man of gret auctorite,' simultaneously named and unnamed at the end of Chaucer's poem, recalls the memorial antics in *Inferno* III, where Dante refers to, but refuses to name, 'l'ombra di colui/che fece per viltade il gran rifiuto' ('the shade of him who, through cowardice, made the great refusal').⁵¹

Looking over this trajectory, the *House of Fame* can thus be read as taking its structure not from *Inferno*, *Purgatorio*, and *Paradiso*, but from *Inferno* I, II, and III, thereby breaking off just beyond the entrance to Hell. On this reading, the *House of Fame* begins in the earthly underworld and descends, leaving the reader to confront the non-closure of that final ellipsis. My intention is not to suggest that Chaucer ignores *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, but rather to point out how firmly he roots his poem in the narrowly infernal so that the poem always announces its dedication to the underworld. It will be as poet of hell that Chaucer primarily engages Dante in all of his subsequent poems.

Conclusion

Dante is a key poet for Chaucer because he stands as intermediary between the distant literary past and the present, and he serves as

⁵⁰ *Inferno* III.57. Dante also expresses the large number of souls wanting to cross Acheron by adapting Virgil's comparison of human generations to leaves. The shades wanting to enter hell fling themselves into Charon's boat 'Come d'autunno si levan le foglie . . . fin che 'l ramo/vede a la terra tutte le sue spoglie' ('Just as in autumn the leaves fall away . . . until the bough sees all its spoil on the ground'), *Inferno* III.112–114. Chaucer taps into, but changes this tradition, stating that the noisy house of twigs has entries 'as fele as of leves ben in trees/In somer, whan they grene been' (III.1946–1947).

⁵¹ *Inferno* III.59–60.

the poet *par excellence* for complicating prior poetic accounts. The *House of Fame*, in assembling together Dante, Virgil, and Claudian, proposes a sophisticated humanism of the underworld. Authorities vie with each other toward no certain conclusion, and are often misrepresented in the first place. This epistemological instability is the intellectual curse of the sublunar world. It is the curse of literary tradition. Chaucer chose to embrace this crisis head-on, assuring us that Geoffrey does not transcend the realm of the 'queen of heaven and hell,' the 'regina dell' eterno pianto,' the 'quene . . . of the derke pyne.' He provides no definitive end to his poem, no Dantean meeting with God the Father. Rather, as Claudian leaves Ceres searching for her daughter in Book III of the unfinished *De Raptu Proserpinae*, so the *House of Fame* breaks off in its Book III with Geoffrey still searching for *tydynges*.

THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS OF ULRICH PINDER:
THE IMPACT OF HUMANISM ON THE CAREER OF
A NUREMBERG TOWN PHYSICIAN AROUND 1500

Catrien Santing

Introduction

Brodium	Hartmanni	simulat	scienciam	Theodorici	blandore
Reubarbarum	Hieronymi	damnat	integritatem	Phrisii	furore
Herba	Cramerii	turpat	consilium	Archiatri	marcore
Minutio	Ciclopidis	inficit	iudicium	phisici	virore
Receptum	Ruchamerii	silet	salutem	chirurgi	pavore
Passula	Ulsenii	extorquet	mercedem	bonorum	livore
Vinum	Udalrici	fallit	doctrinam	Ulsenii	merore ¹

In form and content this short diatribe, scribbled down by the Nuremberg town physician Hartmann Schedel, but composed by his former colleague Theodericus Ulsenius, is typical of the humanistic mentality, attitude, knowledge, and behaviour of that town's medical doctors around 1500. The bonds between these functionaries, whose names—Hartmann Schedel, Hieronymus Münzer, Johannes Kramer, Jodocus Ruchamer, Theodericus Ulsenius and Udalricus Pyndarus—are mentioned in the verses, were different in quality. But as a rule they were close, and marked by many cross-links of a personal, professional, literary, and intellectual nature. These strong relationships, however, seem to have known their difficulties, as we can conclude from the caustic verses cited above.

In considering the intellectual world of the Renaissance, physicians and writers on medicine (which are not necessarily the same category of people) have a great deal to tell us, for they were often as prominent and productive within it as the more famous humanists or literary figures with whom they conversed, and whom they often treated.

This quotation is part of the conclusion of an enlightening article on the relation between medicine and humanism as well as medical

¹ Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm. 428 f. 242r.

humanism in Ferrara by Vivian Nutton.² We shall use it as starting point and then quickly take the passes of the Alps as newly-graduated medical doctors from the Northern-European countries once used to do. Whereas in the late medieval and Renaissance period German medical faculties were usually comparatively small and modestly equipped in terms of personnel, books and practical possibilities, aspiring doctors from that region usually went to Italy to round off their academic studies in order to make themselves familiar with the latest medical knowledge, techniques, and practices. At the Italian universities they at the same time became acquainted with humanistic literature and scholarship. The Nuremberg physicians all studied in Italy, where the state of the art education endowed them with a frame of mind orientated towards antiquity.³ This means that with respect to these physicians 'Humanism' has to be understood much more broadly, and certainly not only in terms of the medical Renaissance—to which some of them indeed contributed—but also by concentrating on the new philology and anatomy which caused changes in medical knowledge and practices. Ulrich Pinder and his *sodales* felt themselves true, heartfelt humanists and therefore posed straightforwardly as such. They claimed that both their medical and literary oeuvre turned them into legitimate members of the Republic of Letters. Many German Renaissance physicians were indeed prolific medical authors and at the same time well-known *literati*. Medical doctors played a relatively important role in early Humanism. This article intends to prove that the humanistic inspiration of these physicians helped to create a new medico-professional image: that of the university-trained *medicinae doctor* who was known for his humanist ambitions and pretensions.⁴ Thanks to his civilised demeanour and learned stature, this new type of healer was able to meet his upper-class patients as equals and therefore to further the social advance of both himself and his profession.

In what follows, the socio-cultural, intellectual, and professional world of Nuremberg's Renaissance physicians will be under discussion. To achieve our objectives, the life and works of that town's most impor-

² NUTTON, 'Medical Humanism'.

³ For the *translatio studii* between Italy and Germany see SOTTILI, *Università e cultura*, containing detailed information on the student years of German Humanists in Italy. On Nuremberg see especially: 'Nürnberger Studenten an italienischen Renaissance-Universitäten'. On Germany: NUTTON, 'Medicine'.

⁴ See on this: SCHMITZ und KEIL, *Humanismus und Medizin*, esp. BAADER, 'Antikenrezeption'; SCHNELL, 'Arzt und Literat' and KÄSTNER, 'Arzt und Kosmographie'.

tant, but nowadays least known medical doctor Ulrich Pinder (†1519), alias Udalricus Pyndarus, will function as a main focus. In discussing him, we can immediately adapt Nutton's assertions by stating that Renaissance physicians not only conversed with and, of course, treated famous humanistic figures, but looked upon themselves as genuine humanists producing a variety of writings. The performance of Ulrich Pinder enables us to reconstruct the 'Erwartungshorizont'—to employ Gadamer's striking but untranslatable conceptual terminology—of a learned medical doctor around the year 1500, who moved around in humanistic circles.⁵ This 'expectative horizon' refers back to the range of action of a Renaissance physician, and to the margins within which he was able to shape his own professional and intellectual life. Determined by his experiences and prejudices, by the established textual and socio-cultural traditions, how did he deploy and materialise his own, medical and non-medical humanistic learning in the construction of his individual identity? On the one hand, thanks to the rise of Humanism and the ongoing professionalisation of society, his perspectives may be called unprecedented; on the other hand social and geographic background as well as economic situation held back the social ascent of a humbly born physician.

Doctores and bibliophagi

Nuremberg medical doctors around 1500 knew each other very well, worked together professionally, but also co-operated in many non-medical enterprises of a literary, scientific, and artistic nature. All of them made use of the famous libraries of Hartmann Schedel and Hieronymus Münzer: libraries that, for those days, were of an unheard-of richness and modernity.⁶ Their shelves contained all the canonical texts of medicine in various translations and editions, all ancient authors at the time considered to be important, and a good selection of works recently published by Italian humanists. In cases where Schedel was not in a position to buy a printed copy, he obtained a manuscript, or visited the monastery where it was kept, in order to transcribe it. Moreover, this *bibliophagus*, as his friend Ulsenius nicknamed him,⁷ was in the habit of transcribing whatever his like-minded friends

⁵ GADAMER, *Wahrheit und Methode*.

⁶ STAUBER, *Schedelsche Bibliothek* and GOLDSCHMIDT, *Hieronymus Münzer*.

⁷ SANTING, *Geneeskunde en humanisme*, 54.

committed to paper or parchment. Thus, the literary expressions of Nuremberg humanists survived for the greater part because Schedel inserted them into one of his many compendious volumes. The library of Hartmann Schedel may therefore be called the embodiment of humanistic literary and medical discourse in early Renaissance Germany, and its composition is in itself an important source for intellectual history.⁸

For their performance in writing, the Nuremberg physicians thus commanded the same *armamentarium*. From many remarks, marginalia, and even memoranda it can be concluded that both Schedel and Münzer were very liberal in lending their precious volumes to colleagues. Apart from united efforts in a mere professional domain, the members of the humanist circle furnished each other with reading material and commented on each other's works. In pieces of writing by each one of them, through dedications, panegyric letters or poems, citations, and so forth, traces of other humanists can be pointed out. With their writings the doctors endeavoured to influence the public image of the physician around the year 1500 quite profoundly, as we shall further learn from scrutinizing Pinder's works. Considering this, one has to bear in mind that the doctors were very close to each other. Not only did they drink their glasses of beer in the same Herrentrinkstube; they were also assigned to the same jobs, and thus together had to work out problems and jointly draw up medical and other advice for the city council.⁹ In 1496, for instance, Münzer, Pinder and Ulsenius served on a committee intended to restructure the local Latin School into a 'Poetenschule'.¹⁰

Delicate subjects like the use of astrology were thought to be suitable for public discussion. Pinder, for instance, once decided to organise a public *disputatio* on the various types of prognostic signs and their relationship with both Christian religion and natural philosophy, and he himself and Hieronymus Münzer contributed to it.¹¹ Alas, Schedel only transcribed the invitation to the disputation—which is thought to have taken place in the Dominican monastery—so that we can only speculate about the content of the actual discussion. Münzer possessed various books on the magical and arcane sciences,

⁸ An important start with this has been made by: HERNAD, *Graphiksammlung Schedel*.

⁹ SUDHOFF, 'Kurfischer' and idem, 'Lepraschaubriefe'.

¹⁰ BAUCH, 'Nürnberger Poetenschule 1496'; RUPPRICH, *Briefwechsel*, nn. 106, 176–177.

¹¹ GOLDSCHMIDT, *Münzer*, 31–42.

such as Latin translations of Plato and Hermes Trismegistos and various works of Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola. Pico's *Disputatio adversos astrologos* may actually have instigated Münzer's *Disputatio*. The nature and style of the gathering tell us much about the intellectual climate in Nuremberg, a town with a fertile soil for all kinds of discussions. For their exchanges of opinion, the members needed subjects and material which seem to have been furnished by the most active among them.

Manuscript 428 of the Bavarian State Library, once part of the library of Hartmann Schedel, is an anthology of medical writings. The riddle already cited which Schedel hastily scribbled down on one of its pages lists the names of those *doctores medicinae* who, approximately between 1485 and 1510, were rendering services for the Nuremberg town authorities under more or less official terms of employment.¹² Their names are Hartmann Schedel,¹³ Hieronymus Münzer,¹⁴ Johannes Kramer,¹⁵ Jodocus Ruchamer,¹⁶ Theodericus Ulsenius¹⁷ and Udalricus Pyndarus. Other familiar Nuremberg physicians do not figure, because the poem reflects the state of affairs at a given moment. The number of official 'ernannte Stadtärzte' was fluctuating. More names are mentioned in Nuremberg documents concerning health of that time: namely those of Johannes Vinck, Henricus Rosenzweid or Rosenzweig, Johannes Klingsporn, Johannes Lochner, Sebald Mulner and Heinrich Gerathwol. Mulner studied in Padova with Schedel, who held an oration at his promotion ceremony, calling his confrater a *vir egregius . . . gloria medicorum Nuremberge*. He died in 1493 and was buried in the church of St. Lorenz. The books he received from Lochner—who had left the medical profession to enter the monastery of Neunkirchen—went to Schedel, together with his own Paduan lecture notes.¹⁸ Maybe

¹² KNEFELKAMP, *Gesundheitsfürsorge in Nürnberg*; STAUBER, *Schedelsche Bibliothek*, 86–87.

¹³ For an analysis of the state of Schedel literature see: HERNAD and WORSTBROCK, 'Schedel, Hartmann'; HERNAD, *Graphiksammlung Schedel*; LASCHINGER, 'Dr. Hartmann Schedel' and FISCHER, *Hartmann Schedel*. Also, HÖPFNER, *Hermann and Hartmann Schedel*.

¹⁴ On him: GOLDSCHMIDT, *Münzer*; KEIL and WŁODARCZYK, 'Münzer, Hieronymus'.

¹⁵ About him almost nothing is known, apart from the fact that in the early eighties of the fifteenth century he formulated, together with his then colleagues Hermann and Hartmann Schedel, a plague *consilium*: STAUBER, *Schedelsche Bibliothek*, 29 and 87.

¹⁶ No biography exists of Ruchamer. But data can be found in: BÖHME, *Reisesammlungen*, 30–36; KÄSTNER, 'Arzt und Kosmographie', 513–514; SOTTILI, 'Tunc floruit', 69, 70, 75 and idem, *Università di Pavia*, 153.

¹⁷ SANTING, *Geneeskunde en humanisme* and idem, 'Theodericus Ulsenius'.

¹⁸ STAUBER, *Schedelsche Bibliothek*, 47 and 54.

with the exception of Rosenzweig—a Pavia *promotus*—and Gerathwol—active in Celtis's *Sodalitas Danubiana* under the name Euticus—these doctors seem to have been far less prominent in the Nuremberg *respublica litteraria*.¹⁹ The medical doctors mentioned in the riddle are still known—although some are more famous than others—to scholars of the history of medicine and to those who study the cultural history of the Renaissance in Northern Europe. All of them were energetic members of the humanistic circle of Nuremberg dominated by Konrad Celtis, Willibald Pirckheimer and Albrecht Dürer.²⁰

Pinder's performance

This brings us back to the intellectual world of the Renaissance, in which medical doctors indeed played a role that was proportionally larger than might have been expected for the practitioners of such a pedestrian occupation. By way of dealing with Pinder's life and works within its socio-cultural context, the implications of the publicist activities on the part of Renaissance doctors will be shown. In order to preserve his unstable position as a member of Nuremberg's elite, Pinder seems to have been impelled to make a tremendous effort and to distinguish himself in the various spheres of life. The rising force of Humanism in Southern Germany was a welcome instrument for emphasising his qualities and advertising his ambitions. By studying his publications, taking care to discuss medical and non-medical work as one organic whole, and carefully positioning these in their context, we can reveal Pinder's ultimate objectives.

Before going ahead with the evaluation of his dealings, the story of his life allows us to construct the factual world in which Pinder lived and in which he had to earn his subsistence. This includes a typology of the learned *medicinae doctor* in relation to his social and geographical background, and to his network of patronage and educa-

¹⁹ FISCHER, *Schedel*, 57 n. 182. On Vinck, Mulner and Rosenzweig, see: SUDHOFF, 'Lepraschaubriefe'. Vinck was Schedel's successor in Amberg: LASCHINGER, *Schedel*, 138. On him see also: GOLDSCHMIDT, *Münzer*, 24–25, esp. n. 2 who mentions that Vinck also worked in Eichstatt and treated Duke Georg den Reichen in Ingolstadt. On Rosenzweig, Klingsporn, Lochner and Gerathwol, see also: SUDHOFF, 'Kurfischer'. On Rosenzweig too: SOTTILI, 'Tunc floruit', 75 n. 39 (prom. Med. in Pavia 20–3–1489) and idem, 'Università di Pavia', 184. On Gerathwol: RUPPRICH, *Briefwechsel*, 201 n. 1 and GOLDSCHMIDT, *Münzer*, 31.

²⁰ HERRMANN, *Reception* and PFANNER, 'Geisteswissenschaftlicher Humanismus'.

tion—all factors laying down his career possibilities. The next step will be a summarising and evaluative discussion of his works which organizes them into various categories with their own specific aims and intended audiences. The conclusion of this article will revert to the image-building activity of Renaissance physicians such as Pinder.

Around 1500 the Nuremberg authorities usually employed six to eight physicians on a more or less regular basis. The most stable element in this fluctuating corps of medical employees—as he held his position twice as long as did all the others—was Ulrich Pinder. Regrettably, until now it is unknown where Pinder was educated. The beginning of his career followed the traditional lines: a fact which shows that, independently of education or qualifications, it was mainly geographical origin which determined the starting-point of a professional career. Pinder was a 'Schwabe' (Suevian), born in the Southern German town of Nördlingen (south west of Nuremberg) where he served as a town physician from 1484 until 1489.²¹ The name of this town is not unimportant since, somewhat earlier, Hartmann Schedel (later to become his colleague) had been employed there.

Yet via another friend, Leipzig professor of medicine and theologian Martin Polich von Mellerstadt, it came about that Pinder soon moved to the court of Frederick the Wise of Saxony (Plate I). The next two years were spent as a personal physician to the Duke. This transfer is highly significant and must have been prepared thoroughly. Changing places from the modest Swabian town of Nördlingen to the illustrious Saxon court may be valued socially as a major step ahead. Frederick the Wise was the most powerful prince of the Holy Roman Empire, and also the most important Maecenas to humanists and artists in Renaissance Germany.²² Usually, personal physicians to princes stemmed from somewhat better-off surroundings and had received a high standard of general education. After all, they had to keep up appearances as courtiers and were presumed to conduct various other assignments such as the drawing of horoscopes, the formulation of elegant *orationes*, or even the fulfilment of diplomatic services: requirements that Pinder does not seem to have been able to fulfil. Nothing is known about his actual job performance. Since

²¹ On him see still: 'Pindar, Ulrich' in: ROTERMUND (ed.), *Fortsetzung*, VI, 222; BRAUN, 'Pinder'; SCHEJA, 'Über Ulrich Pinder'.

²² BORNKAMM, 'Kurfürst Friedrich der Weise (1463–1525)'; LUDOLPHY, *Friedrich der Weise*, *passim*.

Registrum Speculi intelle

ctualis felicitatis humane: atq; brevis compédii de bone
 valitudinis cura: quod pro honore: obediens
 tia: & amore illustrissimo principi
 domino Friderico Archiduci
 Saxonie: etcete. de
 dicatum est.



Plate I

after two years he left Wittenberg for the less prestigious position of town physician of Nuremberg, one may conclude that things did not work out that well. Relations with the Saxon court, however, continued. The major part of his writings, which were all published in Nuremberg, contains references or even dedications to Duke Frederick. One gets the impression that, while living in Nuremberg, he still functioned as an occasional adviser to the Court on matters of health.

Between 1491 and his death in 1518, Pinder figured in the town administration of Nuremberg as a regular town physician. Besides that, he was also active in the field of printing and publishing. The printing press he owned was not only used for the publication of his own works, but also for the products of the *Sodalitas Celtica*, an association of poets and scholars around the German arch-humanist Konrad Celtis.²³ In his twenty years of service to the town authorities, Pinder first and foremost developed into a reliable doctor on whom one could always count. Medical tasks left him, likewise, time for the writing of several very voluminous works. The content of these works is very heterogeneous and varies from devotional picture-books to specialist literature for colleague-physicians. One could classify them under the following headings:

I. MEDICAL WORKS, which means:

writings resulting from actual medical practice in Nuremberg, such as collections of prescriptions, *consilia*, and recommendations for the local authorities;
 reflections on the nature of the medical profession as well as on the requirements for its practitioners;
 new medical material produced either to enlarge or to reflect upon the factual and theoretical base of medical science: i.e. handbooks and editions;

II. NON-MEDICAL WORKS, to be subdivided into:

philosophy, often formulated in connection with the medical profession;
 theology and *devotionalia*;
 natural sciences, such as astrology, astronomy and biology;

²³ JUNGHANS, 'Ulrich Pinders', 3-34, esp. 4-11.

This scheme draws attention to the fact that Pinder refrained from using certain types of literature that in those days were tremendously popular. He did not write humanistic poetry; he avoided epistolography; he did not care for historiography. Not having the money for travelling—in contrast to his well-to-do colleague Münzer—he showed no apparent interest in geography and cartography. Apart from his participation in a discussion on the use of magic, astrology, and divination, he only touched on natural scientific subjects in the context of his comprehensive *Specula*.

Pinder's *Specula*

In their capacity of practising healers, Nuremberg's town-physicians had not only to attend a patient's bedside, but were as well occasionally asked to draw up *consilia* which could ensure the patient's future well-being. During the eighties and nineties of the fifteenth century the town of Nuremberg was afflicted by a range of diseases, such as the bubonic plague and an epidemic outburst of syphilis that encouraged many regular and irregular healers to try their luck in the despairing city. Because of this, the joint physicians felt obliged to ask the authorities for the protection of their profession. In 1502, both Münzer and Pinder prepared an official complaint in connection with the admittance of the itinerant healer Georg Raddorfer.²⁴ Probably the physicians had held a conference on this topic, at which occasion both Pinder and Münzer might have offered to make a draft of their formal complaint in order to let the others choose the most versatile and eloquent among them. Both doctors drew a sharp distinction between learned, university-trained physicians, who knew Latin, who mastered the ancient medical texts and their terminology, and who, thanks to all that, were able to reason properly. The despised rivals who had learned their trade entirely by experience were of course just inferior *empirici*—which was in those days the polite word for quacks. The version of Pinder won, probably because of its more businesslike character and its more subdued tone: elements making it more suitable for presentation to the authorities. Conscious of the fact that such intricacies, however important, might threaten the charm of the

²⁴ Bayerische Staatsbibliothek clm. 224, ff. 312–313 (Münzer) and 314 (Pinder) and SUDHOFF, 'Kurpfuscher', 98–119, esp. 102–104 and 107–108.

letter, the physicians asked the lawyer Peter Stahl to summarise the juridical details in a separate apostil.

In general, Nuremberg medical humanists held a special concern for the theoretical content which constituted the written basis and legitimisation of their discipline. They published editions of famous ancient authors and wrote university handbooks. This reveals the fact that, additionally to their writing of typical Renaissance works such as poetry, plays, and philosophical treatises, humanistic doctors continued with the writing of fairly technical medical works. Around 1500 'new' antique medical texts were found, while the established canon of the medical curriculum obtained fresh philological attention.²⁵

In the case of Nuremberg Pinder, together with his colleague Ulsenius, was the expert in the field of more practical medical writings. In 1506 Ulrich Pinder published a compilation characteristic of this field and entitled *Epiphanie medicorum*.²⁶ The title of this compilation of course already suggests that Pinder strove to elevate the status of medical doctors. The text of this work contains the opinions of various ancient and medieval physicians, explaining to the readers the three main diagnostic methods of that time: uroscopy, the feeling of the pulse, and the use of the beryl stone—which was considered to be especially apt for the determination of fevers. The composition and content of the book resemble a string of pearls—*Margaritha*, the humanists would say—of medical statements from antique and medieval medical authors. The uroscopic treatise, for instance, is preceded by an elegantly styled rhetorical introduction which claims that the work drew information from Hippocrates, Galen, Avicenna, Theophilus Philaretus, Ysaac (Isaac Judaeus), and Aegidius Corboliensis. The actual work, however, is in fact nothing more than an adapted edition of Aegidius Corboliensis's *De urinis*, for which Pinder used the text with commentary by Gentile da Foligno.²⁷ In the second and third part of the *Epiphanie*, an identical procedure is followed: the views on the pulse are based on Galen, Avicenna, Bernhardus de Gordone, Jacobus de Partibus, Theophilus Philaretus, and again Aegidius

²⁵ BAADER, 'Antikenrezeption'.

²⁶ For this article was used the copy in the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin—Preußischer Kulturbesitz, If 660.

²⁷ Maybe this work was also edited separately by Pinder. It is mentioned as such in *Allgemeines Gelehrtenlexikon*, 6. Erg. Band, 222: *Ægydii liber de urinis cum Gentilis commentario* (Augsburg, 1506) and in: SCHEJA, 'Pinder', 458 n. 3 *Aegidii liber de Urinis cum Gentilis Commentario*. Tum Udalrici Binder cura, 1504.

Corboliensis.²⁸ The author elaborates quite extensively on the problem of the pulse: a much-discussed topic in Renaissance medicine.²⁹

The title and content of the third part of the *Epiphanie, Berillus discernendi causas differentias febrium*, are inspired by Nicolas Cusanus who had composed a short treatise on the wonders of the jewel beryl.³⁰ The larger part of Pinder's work, however, just goes back to Avicenna's *Canon*—which is not surprising but also hardly innovative.³¹ From the systematic treatment of the three diagnostic methods, from the simple design of the book, and from the colourful charts with urine glasses, it can be concluded that the *Epiphanie Medicorum* was meant to be a practical handbook for colleague physicians, since in their daily practice the making of the right diagnosis was elementary, but crucial. The important role the author reserved for reason in his argument is remarkable. Empirical data, he says, had to be studied and could be the basis for conclusions. This, however, was never sufficient, as the empirical always had to be interpreted in the context of the prevailing theory. Therefore, this compilation of Pinder is in accordance with the tendency towards the particular and the specific within the medical discipline of those days, and may be valued as typical with respect to the late medieval interest in *practica*.³²

Ulrich Pinder was the most prolific writer among the Nuremberg doctors. He was able to express his thoughts in many different genres and in discussing a wide range of topics and themes. His most popular (and still best known) works are however a series of theological and devotional treatises. Their scope and intended public differ from those of the writings of his colleagues—something which forces us to explain why he is an exception. Pinder expressed his religious thoughts in beautifully executed picture-books which contain many illustrations by famous Nuremberg artists. They may have been meant to become bestsellers and to make more money out of his printing press. In producing these texts, Pinder followed the same procedure as he had done with the *Epiphanie*. Again he compiled—one could also say pasted together—nice books on the basis of several medieval *devotionalia*.

²⁸ Pinder's colleague Münzer owned a copy of Aegidius Corbeliensis's, *De pulsibus* (Padua, 1484): GOLDSCHMIDT, *Münzer*, 130 n. 90.

²⁹ BYLEBYL, 'Disputation and Description'.

³⁰ Nicolaus Cusanus, 'De Beryllo' in: CUSA, *Opera*, 267–284.

³¹ On the continued popularity of Avicenna see: STRAISI, *Avicenna*.

³² On this tendency: STRAISI, *Medieval & Renaissance Medicine*, 152.

Der beschlossenen gart des rosenkrantz Marie (1505) is a traditional *Andachtsbuch* of late medieval piety. The large bipartite volume comprises 300 folios with the unheard-of amount of 1000 woodcuts, carried out by members of the Dürer workshop, such as Hans Schäußelein, Hans Baldung Grien and other Dürer pupils. Pinder probably was only the editor and publisher of the work, which was written by Johann Henlein, the prior of Nuremberg's Dominicans. The book consists of a series of so-called *Spiegel* or *exempla* drawn from the Bible, the Church fathers, and medieval mystics.³³

In 1475 the Brotherhood of Saint Ursula was created at Strasbourg. For this organisation Pinder printed an *Einblattdruck* and in 1513 he published a short treatise on its religious aims. In order to emphasise the success of this confraternity, the treatise describes in detail the route of St. Ursula's '*Schiflein*' from Alsace-Lorraine up to its arrival at Nuremberg's St. Catharine convent, showing that everywhere along the ship's itinerary local branches sprang up. With prayers, masses and good works the patrician participants could pay their fare in order to sail with St. Ursula's ship to heaven. The printer-author dedicated this work to the elector Frederick the Wise, his former patron and lifelong Maecenas who was also a member of the confraternity of Saint Ursula.³⁴

The *Speculum patientie* (1509) belongs to the same category. For this, Pinder took the fourteenth-century *Consolatio theologiae*, written by the Dominican Johannes de Tambaco as a starting point, and transformed this text into a late medieval *Trostbuch*. However devotional and popular this mirror was intended to be, the author still reveals himself as a physician. The rather medical linguistic usage of the introduction is remarkable. He managed to give a medical turn to his main argument by arguing that the book provided medicines for the body as well as the spirit, therewith supplying the soul with peace, happiness, and tranquillity. In the section *De remediis*, actual therapies against melancholy are mentioned, such as the drinking of wine and the usage of precious stones and herbs like lapis lazuli and bugloss (ox-tongue). When discussing the several characteristics of *patientia*, Pinder not only uses religious authors such as Augustine, Guilhermis Parisiensis,

³³ On this work: JUNGHAUS, 'Speculum', 7–8. On the illustrations: SCHREYL, *Hans Schäußelein*, 53–54 and nn. 2–238; ZIJLMA and FALK, *Hollstein's German Engravings*, nn. 373–709. On the Rosenkranz Bruderschaft: HOFMANN, 'Rosenkranz'.

³⁴ See on this: JUNGHAUS, 'Speculum', 7–8; on the fraternity: HOPMANN, 'Ursula, hl'.

and Baptista Mantuanus, but also philosophers such as Seneca and Plato. At certain points even Hippocrates' name was dropped.³⁵

In 1507 and 1510 the different parts of what in reference to Vincent of Beauvais could be called Pinder's *Speculum maior* appeared: a *Speculum passionis Christi* (1507), a *Speculum intellectuale foelicitatis humane*, a *Compendium breve de valitudinis cura*, a *Speculum Phlebotomiae*, and a *Tractatus simplicium medicinarum* (all 1510). A woodcut of a stern-looking Frederick the Wise and a dedicatory letter to this same prince preceded each part. The identical formats, lettering, as well as several cross-references suggest that these volumes must have been intended to form a comprehensive whole. The set of five treatises presents a series of alternative therapies for the fulfilment of men's craving for happiness. Both goal and methods are often described in medical terms. Hence, the *salus animarum* was not only accomplished by correct religious and ethical behaviour. The longed-for harmony could also be encouraged with the help of medical knowledge concerning *compositiones*, *complexiones*, and *affectiones*.

The first volume shows us especially a doctor who is a devout catholic. With his *Speculum passionis Christi* Pinder again tried to meet the emotional needs of the late medieval layman. Basically the text is nothing more than a gospel harmony supplemented with other biblical and theological literature.³⁶ For his biblical exegesis Pinder refers to obvious names, such as Augustine, Jerome, Origen, Isidore, Bede, Cassiodorus and Bernard of Clairvaux. Besides these *doctores domini* the names of Simon Fidati of Cascia, Reinhard of Laudenberg and Ludolf of Saxony occur. Moreover, he mentions the Franciscan preachers Johannes the Capistrano and Johannes Gritsch, the Italian philosophers Marsilio Ficino and Pico della Mirandola, as well as the Arab doctor Avicenna. Describing his labour as '*convehere*', on yet another occasion Pinder did no more than bind together the various *dicta*. Thanks to this, however, the complex theological material was converted into a practical meditation manual. The sixty-five articles, illustrated by seventy-seven woodcuts, make it possible for the reader to identify with Christ's suffering in detail and meditate upon it. By reading about the consequences which the crucifixion had had

³⁵ On this: JUNGHAUS, 'Speculum', 8. For Dambach: SCHULZ, 'Johannes von Dambach'.

³⁶ On this work: JUNGHAUS, 'Speculum', 11–34. On the illustrations, which were partly taken from the *Rosenkrantz*: DREIßIGER, 'Bildschmuck'.

for mankind, he learned how to cure his own soul and how to live a truly Christian life. Again, however, the intention of this work was not purely devotional, since it contains various counsels for its readers about how to restore one's mental and physical health. The author, for instance, claims that whoever managed to understand the consequences of the crucifixion of Christ, at the same time would discover a remedy for the healing of his own soul.

The idea that spiritual and physical problems are interconnected, and that both lay within the range of expertise of the learned doctor, is also the Leitmotiv of the other four *Specula*. The *Speculum intellectuale felicitatis humane* is the most pretentious of the five parts. This second volume of the series *Specula* thus held the same aims as the first, but presented in its mirror more learned ways to win supreme and eternal bliss. Again it is not an original work, but an interesting *florilegium* of the *Opera omnia* of Nicolaus Cusanus, complemented by abstracts from Pico della Mirandola and Marsilio Ficino.³⁷ The introduction already makes clear the context of this compilation. The names of Moses, Pythagoras and Pico point in the direction of the then fashionable *prisca sapientia*. Pinder even set his work under the aegis of the Cabala. According to him the ancient Hebrews already had access to this knowledge, yet he believed that Moses had not only passed it on to the Jews, but to the Christians as well. In his book Pinder in general seems to rehearse Cusanus's main themes: the principles of vision, the indivisibility of the first principle (God), the threefold *circulus universorum*, the *docta ignorantia*—all concepts that in the opinion of Pinder would enable man to choose between right and wrong. When a person had mastered this power of discernment, he could continue with the next step: how to maintain and harness the *dignatio hominis*. In this, Pinder follows Pico, but he does not conceal the underlying religious bias of the *Speculum*, by stressing that God should be man's only example. In a conclusion, the book summarises the several ways to know God by presenting seven mirrors: *amor rationalis*, *ratio internalis*, *creatura corporalis*, *scriptura divinalis*, *iusticia universalis*, *anima rationalis*, and *natura angelica seu intellectualis*. A short appendix to the work warns Frederick the Wise and Pinder's friend

³⁷ MEIER-OESER calls this work: 'Keine Cusanus-edition im eigentlichen Sinne. Enthält jedoch längere, zumeist als solche ausgewiesene Passagen aus *De docta ignorantia*, *De coniecturis*, *De filatione dei*, *De dato patris luminum*, *De Beryllo*, *Idiota de mente*, *De venatione sapientiae* und *De possess.*', in idem, *Präsenz des Vergessenen*, 402, see also ibidem: 66, 72, 119, 131, 134, 197, 337 and 374.

Simon Pistoris, the prince's physician.³⁸ The letter serves as an overture to the third *speculum* by stating that the duke was the protector of the *res publica*. In order to maintain this position he should also pay attention to his own physical well being, since a healthy constitution was the precondition for natural self-control, moral rectitude, and rational studiousness.

In the *Compendium de bone valetudinis cura* Pinder's pretensions again were unequivocally high, maintaining that previous professors who wrote on the topic had been too credulous. He declares himself never to have imitated, but merely to have followed Galen, Avicenna, Rhases, Johannes Mesue Damascenus, Ysaac, Marsilio Ficino and comparable *consilii* of yet other writers. Our author explains how the physician could regulate the *non naturales* by systematically advancing from general principles about the *spiritus* and the different parts of the body to specific rules for drinking, eating, and abstinence. All possible measurements ought to be observed in relation to the four *humores*, the consequences for the body induced by emotions, joy, sadness, anger, fear, shame, and coitus, and by the demand for recreation, bathing, and sleep. The survey ends with special regulations for the elderly. Summarising, one may conclude that the purpose of the work was not so much the improvement of Frederick the Wise's private health, but to generate a didactic discussion aiming at the optimum of complexional balance in general. For the greater part, Pinder follows Avicenna in combination with Hippocrates and Galen, giving the treatise a more practical emphasis by inserting recipes and illustrating his argument with examples taken from the then highly fashionable *De vita libri triplici* of Marsilio Ficino.³⁹

The fourth and fifth parts of the volume are merely extensions of the *regimen*. In case doctor and patient failed to conserve the complexional harmony, the necessary therapy was bound to be more intrusive. Phlebotomy and pharmaceutical treatment should produce an improvement. The treatise on blood-letting is again very practical and based on Avicenna, mainly complemented by information drawn from Galen and Rhases. In addition the treatise builds on Hippocrates, Rabbi Moses (Maimonides), Aristotle, and Gentile da

³⁸ BAUCH, *Leipziger Frühhumanismus*.

³⁹ For instance *Cura*, f. 1: Exemplum Ficino = *De studiosorum Sanitate tuenda*, in: FICINO, *De vita triplici*, ed. Kaske, Book I. See also on the topic of diet: KÜMMEL, 'Homo litteratus'.

Foligno. The principles of blood-letting are covered, and Pinder points out the right time for bleeding as well as the illnesses for which the shedding of blood was beneficial. The book discusses the several veins to incise, and the analysis of blood, ending with alleviation by the application of cupping-glasses. All regulations are summarised in a detailed schedule which comprehends every aspect of bloodletting and cupping to be observed.

The *Tractatus simplicium medicinarum* explains not only the incorporation of Galenic simples into the theory of primary qualities and complexional balances, but also lists various herbs based on his elementary qualities and grades. Once more, Avicenna is a main source of information, but this time the great Arab doctor is equalled by Serapion, since large parts of the *Tractatus* were derived from the latter's *Liber de medicamentis simplicibus*. Apart from those two authors Pinder, of course, refers to Galen's *De simplicibus*, and makes use of Hippocrates, Galen, Johannes Mesue Damascenus, Ysaac, and Averroes. Also in this volume Pinder is very much practically oriented; he mainly concentrates on the nature of the simples and their different operations. Towards the end the book there is a list resembling a *quid pro quo*. The pharmaceuticals for each individual body part are listed according to their effect. This pragmatic emphasis may be explained by Pinder's expectation that his manual would be read both by professionals and by—albeit educated—lay people. Only rational people could apply his methods, as is shown by the final remark of his introduction: 'Et hoc in finitur tabula multum necessaria medico scientifico volenti praticare.'⁴⁰ However medico-technical this part of the volume may seem, the author held it to be on a perfectly equal level with the other constituents of the *Speculum*. That he considered medicines to be equally important for the acquisition of happiness can be concluded from the chapter entitled: *Medicina ducit ad paradisum*,⁴¹ and the mentioning of many so-called *philosophi* such as Democritus, Anaxagoras, Hermes Trismegistus, Pythagoras, and Alexander of Tralles in the medical *Specula*.⁴² This proves that, despite the somewhat medieval title, and its often scholastic formulas and reasonings, Pinder's *Specula* are yet another declaration of a newly won self-consciousness by an important town physician.

⁴⁰ PINDER, *Tractatus*, f. F v r.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, f. F iii r.

⁴² *Ibidem*, f. F iii r.

Intellectual horizon

When Pinder's colleague Theodericus Ulsenius in 1495 delivered his *oratio* on the professional requirements of the Nuremberg town physician, he addressed his audience as *patroni litterarum*.⁴³ This salutation indicates an assembly of erudites, whose learning, attitude of mind, literary output, and gentlemanlike demeanour engendered tight mutual bonds. The members of the Nuremberg humanist circle had different social backgrounds and earned their money in diverse ways. Yet an intense longing for the wonders of Antiquity and a commonly experienced enthusiasm for the Italianate Humanism strengthened ties between the various participants and moulded them into a closely knitted avant-garde.⁴⁴ The common ideals may have smoothed social distinctions somewhat; but the officials Pinder and Ulsenius were not on the same level with their rich colleagues Schedel and Münzer, not to mention the members of the ruling Nuremberg elite such as Sebald Schreyer and Willibald Pirckheimer. Their relatively low status may provide an explanation for Pinder's and Ulsenius's higher literary production and for their more explicit way of expressing their views on the elevated state of the physician.

The new professional image which these doctors propagated harbours two leading concepts: that of the *vates* and that of the *medicus/philosophus*. In order to operate these two concepts successfully, the doctors had to prove their versatility in languages and to show their literary acumen, which encompassed the mastering of various genres. The Nuremberg doctors employed several genres in order to accomplish their various literary and social objectives. For colleagues they edited medical texts, wrote handbooks and thought of stimulating *questiones* for discussion. For their fellow humanists they composed poetry and compiled philosophical *compendia*. For their patrons they held *orationes* and *panegyrici*, for the lay public at large they put together travel literature, chronicles and *devotionalia* in the vernacular. Most of them had enough learning at their disposal to pass as universal scholars. A humanist education, however, also implied that the authors knew which genre was appropriate for the occasion. The writings of the Nuremberg Humanists show that these authors were able to differentiate in style, genre, and form depending on the public,

⁴³ Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm. 962, ff. 78–81.

⁴⁴ CAESAR, 'Sebald Schreyer'.

aim, and occasion.⁴⁵ Their compositional methods reveal that the means which they used in putting together their works are very similar indeed. Most aspects of their oeuvre, whether medical or purely literary, were steered by the demands of special occasions: friends and patrons had to be satisfied, specific problems had to be addressed, and their position in the humanist world had to be confirmed. This explains not only why many of the writings mentioned are improvisations, but also allows us to describe the creative process as a joint venture, resulting in the cumulative product of two or even more authors. Specific dialogical literary forms, such as *questiones* or aphorisms, are once more a revealing testimony of this animated atmosphere and underline the dialogical character of the town's intellectual life.⁴⁶

What holds good for Pinder and Ulseus, on the basis of their ordinary origin and their modest means, applies in fact to all doctors discussed, given that their medical profession generally was not held in high esteem. At the university, the medical faculty was, apart from the propaedeutic *artes*, the lowest in rank. Members of the elite almost never sent their sons to Italy for the study of medicine. For scions of the highest social circles the study of law was a much better basis for a future career. As in antiquity, medicine had been an occupation of slaves and was considered to be a craft instead of an *ars*; physicians could not be by nature members of the intellectual and artistic elite. Thus it was up to them to prove the legitimacy of their membership.⁴⁷ Social disdain evoked many an *apologia* by medical doctors of the fifteenth and sixteenth century. Schedel, for instance, felt obliged to defend his profession in a *Laus medicinae*,⁴⁸ whereas Ulseus edited the pseudo-Hippocratic *De Insania Democriti* with the same objectives in mind.⁴⁹ Their arguments together with all the pretensions of status regarding the *philosophus-medicus* we met above, seem to continue the fifteenth century Italian dispute started by Petrarca

⁴⁵ This increasing sense of differentiation in public seems to be general among German humanists. On this see: MÜLLER, *Gedechtnus*, esp. Chapters VI and VII and WEINMAYER, *Studien zur Gebrauchssituation*.

⁴⁶ On the convivial character of Renaissance intellectualism: WEST, 'Public Knowledge'.

⁴⁷ ZORN, 'Soziale Stellung', 46–48.

⁴⁸ Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm. 168. See on this SCHNELL, 'Arzt und Literat', 57 n. 71.

⁴⁹ Pseudo-Hippocrates, *De Insania Democriti* (Augsburg, 1503). On this: RÜTTEN, *Demokrit lachender Philosoph*, 152–153 and SANTING, *Geneeskunde en humanisme*, 235–241.

and *Salutati* on the order of precedence of the various disciplines.⁵⁰ Stressing the strong relation between medicine and philosophy was an ideal way to secure the elevation of the position and status of medicine. As we have seen, all Nuremberg physicians tried to picture themselves as *philosophi*, and in order to promote their case they plundered the works of fashionable ancient and humanist doctors and philosophers, also reaching back to the 'despised' medieval authorities.⁵¹

The modernity of Nuremberg medical Humanism lies mainly in the exhibition of fashionable antique and contemporary names. Often the titles and the introductory poems suggest highly-styled Renaissance products. Closer inspection reveals that the works themselves are for the greater part encyclopaedic compilations, in which the author, the commentator, and the compiler can only with the greatest difficulty be distinguished from each other. The Nurembergers often refer to their writing activities with terms such as *convehere*, *coniicere*, or even *colligere*, and just like medieval encyclopaedists they produced arrangements of *auctoritates*. The originality of their work is in the choice of the sources, in the language chosen, and in the division and presentation of the material.⁵² This is what makes, for instance, Hartmann Schedel's history an up-to-date historical, cosmographic, and geographic volume with state-of-the-art illustrations.⁵³ The same goes for the Nuremberg medical-humanist oeuvre; its various forms and contents point to practical purposes—something which forced Pinder to rearrange old subject matter. This focuses our attention on the novel organisation and the presentation of Renaissance medical knowledge.

The discussion of Pinder's oeuvre above outlines the intellectual horizon of a prominent Renaissance physician. It is clear that the range of his interests was very wide and surpasses that of the average medical man. His inclinations are in complete accord with contemporary academic ideals, which looked upon the *studia humanitatis* as perfect instruments for the moulding of character, spirit, and intel-

⁵⁰ Texts in: GARIN, *Disputa delle arti nel Quattrocento*; PAGALLO, 'Nuovi testi'; GRASSI and KESSLER, *Jurisprudenz oder Medizin*. On the discussion: BUCK, 'Medizin im Verständnis des Renaissancehumanismus'.

⁵¹ Especially at Italian universities the ties between those disciplines were very close: KRISTELLER, 'Philosophy and Medicine', and idem, 'Medizin im Verständnis des Renaissancehumanismus', 184–186.

⁵² On *compilatio*: MINNIS, 'Late-Medieval Discussions' and idem, *Medieval Theory*, 94–103 and 190–21; ROUSE & ROUSE, 'Ordinatio'.

⁵³ On the formation process of the Schedel chronicle: VOGEL, 'Schedel als Kompilator'.

ligence. As has been explained above, the problem was that medical knowledge was not undisputably reckoned to be within this province of the anciently approved *artes* learning. In order to make up for this disadvantage, some of the physicians became accomplished, fashionable poets. Pinder's colleague Ulsenius, for instance, combined his poetical talents with his medical insights: he styled himself as the antique *vates* who saw into the origins of illnesses and sang about their remedies. Again and again he stressed the fact that Apollo, the father of Aesculapius, was the father of poetry as well as of medicine. This high-flown style did not seem to have been the cup of tea of the severe and devout Pinder. Even so, in order to create an intellectual image many physicians modelled themselves after Hippocrates and Galen and became philological experts of Greek medical writings. This, however, was also not really the route which Pinder chose for his self-presentation. In a time of plagues and other contagious afflictions, the medical professional brought him to meet new requirements and social needs. He opted for a set of more practical answers. The dilemma, however, between the Galenic philosopher-physician and the effective medical practitioner had deep repercussions on the construction of a professional image and the connected social status. Each Nuremberg doctor came forward with a solution that was in line with his talents, his social background, his wealth, and of course his preferences. An indication in which direction to look for Pinder is given by the man himself when, in the introduction of his *Regimen sanitatis*, he compares himself with a certain Chrysippus. This Chrysippus is a Greek physician, who is mentioned by Diogenes Laërtius as the Stoic teacher of Eristratos and by Galen as an expert of fevers. It is, however, telling that Pinder also sought to identify himself with yet another Chrysippus: the beautiful son of Pelops, king of Pisa and the nymph Hippodameia, about whose adventures Aeschylus, Euripides and Apollodoros have written.⁵⁴

The series of *Specula* makes his self-fashioning as a *philosophus medicus* more obvious. This is especially true regarding the highly pretentious second part in which the learned doctor reveals himself to be also a doctor of souls. Partly, this recalls Galen's philosopher physician; but even so it can be interpreted in a more traditional sense

⁵⁴ ZIEGLER and SONTHEIMER, *Kleine Pauly*, I, 1169–1171. Münzer possessed a copy of Diogenes Laërtius: GOLDSCHMIDT, *Münzer*, 139 n. 138.

whereby the scholar is the embodiment of all knowledge that is knowable by humans and needed to handle life. This is the medieval encyclopaedic concept: a classification of the sciences which served scholars as a method for finding out the truth. During the Renaissance the encyclopaedic ideal reverted back to the classical concept of a summary of knowledge indispensable for the educated gentleman. This points to a specific *Bildungsideal*: that of the *enkyklios paideia* mirroring the frame of mind of the new *philosophus-medicus*. He who mastered the right knowledge was able to solve every problem and in that the right way of life loomed ahead. Pinder's strategy is obvious. First, by writing a multipartite encyclopaedia which covered theological, philosophical and medical knowledge, Pinder promoted medicine to a higher level. Secondly, he elevated himself from an ordinary physician to a purveyor of truth.

On this interpretation even Pinder's authorship of *devotionalia* makes sense. However much they were intended as sources of profit for his printing-press, this does not belie the fact that these works were meant to serve as *practica* helping mankind in finding the truth. They can therefore be put on a par with the parts of the *Specula* or even with the medical handbooks. As examples of the *theologia platonica*, they harmonised philosophy with the Bible and understood the philosophers of antiquity as forming with the biblical prophets leading up to Christ a great chain. This brings us to one last and thoroughly medieval image, which may also have been in the mind of Pinder: namely that of the *Christus Medicus*.⁵⁵ Pinder's mirrors seem to have produced manifold reflections or refractions making up his self-presentation which was probably more wishful thinking than the naked truth. Let me therefore end with the picture a seventeenth century publisher selected for a reprint of Pinder's *Speculum Passionis* (Plate II). A mirror does not always reflect the actual state of affairs, as was so poignantly described by Oscar Wilde in his *Picture of Dorian Gray*.

⁵⁵ FICHTNER, 'Christus als Arzt'; ZIEGLER, *Medicine and Religion*, 179, 182, 194, 216.



Spiegel
des
Bittern Leidens und Sterbens
JESU CHRISTI.

gedruckt und verlegt durch Johann Baptist Wapf Hof- und Academischen Buchhändler zu Salzburg.

Plate II

JEWISH INTELLECTUAL CULTURE IN RENAISSANCE CONTEXT

Wout Jac. van Bekkum

Italy and Spain

Judaism is a way of life of a particular community caught between tradition and innovation, between faith and reason. The Jewish community of Italy was to a high degree exposed to the impact of the secular culture of the environment, although, of course, cultural interaction and its repercussions for Jewish existence are not an original or uniquely Italian phenomenon. The best example is Muslim Spain in the tenth to twelfth centuries, where Jews integrated into Andalusian society and became associated with Islamic sovereignty in Spain. Particularly in the tenth century and in the early eleventh century, the leaders of the Spanish Judaeo-Arabic community comprised a guarantee for a flourishing courtier culture in which virtuoso scholars, writers and poets contributed to the cultural distinction of that age. However, this symbiosis stopped in the centuries after the Reconquista, and ultimately collapsed with the infamous expulsion from Spain in 1492.¹ Elsewhere efforts continued to be made, with the aim of reviving and reinterpreting Judaism in the light of general intellectual and scientific trends. Renaissance Italy is certainly very suitable for demonstrating the effects of these efforts, which exerted a marked influence upon the characteristics of the Jews living there.

In what ways did Italian Judaism change during this period? When set against the background of the international situation, this period emerges as one of relative tranquillity for the Jews of Italy. Despite the recurrent anti-Jewish actions in the Papal States, particularly in the sixteenth century, socioeconomic conditions were essentially favourable. Already before 1300 we find Ashkenazic (known in Italian as Tedesci) communities in the region under the Republic of Venice. During the fourteenth century more immigrants arrived and an increasing number of prominent and wealthy merchants and entrepreneurs

¹ BEINART, *Moreshet Sepharad*; ASSIS & KAPLAN, *Jews and Conversos*.

contributed to the prosperity of Jewish life in Northern Italy. At the end of the fourteenth century, in 1394, many Jews were expelled from France and crossed the border into Savoy and went on to live in Lombardy, Romagna and the Piedmonte area. At about the same time, in 1391, after the anti-Jewish riots in Seville which spread all over Spain, Sephardic Jews came in waves to Italy, in larger or lesser numbers throughout the fifteenth century, with a peak towards 1492. Natural population increase among the Jews of Renaissance Italy apparently was quite low. In the *Responsa* of the Paduan rabbi Judah Mintz (c. 1410–1508), it is indicated that the Romanesci—Jews of Rome or families which came from Rome—did not have the custom of marrying girls of minor age; elsewhere this was common practice. Families of more than two or three children were rare. However, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the number of Jews was greater than in the early fourteenth century, which means that emigration was outweighed by immigration. This numerical rise is one of the interesting factors in the development of social and cultural activities among Italian Jews of which certain aspects were so specific to the Italian context that they did not subsequently have any wider European application. These observations can be based upon the information at our disposal, for instance, about the education of children.² The traditional Jewish disciplines were not neglected and schools of Rabbinic learning were found in the main cities. Prosperous people would keep a private teacher in their homes, and even in the large communities which had communal educational facilities, the wealthier classes still tended to engage private tutors in order to direct the education of their children towards goals desirable to them. The curriculum was based on the principle that the Jewish and secular subjects were equally important. Jewish subjects taught consisted of the Bible and its commentaries, the Talmud and the Rabbinic codes. General studies included Latin, logic, philosophy, and medicine. Arithmetic, geometry, geography, and astrology would also be offered, alongside letter-writing and oratory. The composite character of the curriculum also required the engagement of Christian teachers. In Siena, Jewish children went to the home of a Christian teacher to study *grammatica*, that is, Italian grammar. When a Rabbinic school was established there, the Christian teacher taught grammar in the

² SHULVASS, *The Jews in the World of the Renaissance*, 168–172; BONFIL, *Jewish Life in Renaissance Italy*, 125–144.

school. The cultural programme also obliged the wealthy student to receive instruction in music and dancing. Jewish interest in music was based upon the conviction that this art is a genuine part of Jewish culture. Dancing—including mixed dancing of both sexes—was an accepted pattern. The passion for music and dancing was so influential that it affected synagogue services. Cantors sang in their synagogues according to Italian melodies. The greatest impact was made by the De Rossi family in Mantua, who composed melodies for a number of important prayers and who also played a role in introducing choirs into the synagogue. This would sometimes lead to a real clash between sacred and profane elements.

In the fifteenth century there were complaints about cantors who chanted the sacred prayers to the tunes of secular folk songs: a practice which dangerously mingled the sacred words with obscene and licentious thoughts. Whatever the situation may have been, the Jews of Italy had a feeling of equality with the rest of society and aspired to full participation in civic life. Scholastic influence appears from the beginning of Italian-Jewish philosophy in the thirteenth century, and by the fifteenth century many Italian-Jewish savants were entirely up-to-date with intellectual developments in the general culture; indeed, some took a leading role in creating them. There is an undeniable naturalness with which the Italian Jews appropriated non-Jewish culture and incorporated it within their traditions. During the Renaissance, this cultural appropriation was reinforced by the belief shared by Jews and Christians alike that Greek and Latin philosophy had its origins and antecedents in the wisdom of the ancient Hebrews. This belief enabled the Mantuan rabbi Judah Messer Leon (d. 1498) to compose a Hebrew treatise on rhetoric based upon the Bible rather than on Greek and Latin sources, and Count Pico della Mirandola to search for Platonic and Christian elements in the Qabbalah: the general name for Jewish mysticism according to the doctrine of the Book of Splendor, a thirteenth-century composition from Spain. The Book of Splendor, in Hebrew the Zohar, was chiefly concerned with the mysteries of *mundus intelligibilis* and represents a Jewish form of theosophy.³ Qabbalah is essentially an attempt to preserve the essential substance of a Jewish faith challenged by the rational theology of the philosophers. The mystical symbolism of the

³ LIEBES, *Studies in the Zohar*, 85–138; BLAU, *The Christian Interpretation of the Cabala*; SECRET, *Le Zohar*, esp. 24–43.

Qabbalah seems to have gained great prominence in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, undoubtedly because of the arrival of Spanish exiles. Receptivity to the new mystical trends grew even stronger in later times but did not implicitly mean that rationalism or secular learning were rejected. Generally speaking, as far as Italian Jewry in the Renaissance is concerned, the lines of cultural allegiances were not sharply demarcated.⁴

Abraham Ibn Ezra and Immanuel of Rome

Italian-Jewish culture was at first strongly enriched by the wandering Spanish scholar and poet Abraham ibn Ezra (1089/92–1164/67), who resided for a number of years in Rome during the early twelfth century. He was a crucial figure in disseminating the Hebrew literature and science of the Spanish-Jewish world among Italian Jews.⁵ He was also very influential in Jewish thought because his combination of Neoplatonism and astrology was taken up and developed by later Jewish thinkers. His reputation as the rationalist exegete of scripture par excellence has continued well into the modern period, and many consider him to be the ancestor of modern biblical criticism. Around 1300 great personalities were active in different cities of Italy, especially in Rome. Already at this time, Rome witnessed a great interest in Jewish philosophy, mysticism and poetry.⁶ One of the most illustrious figures was Immanuel of Rome (1261–1332), also called ‘the emperor of Hebrew literature’. He held the post of community scribe until he was forced to leave Rome temporarily because of some financial problems. Immanuel, known to his Christian friends as Manoello Giudeo, traveled extensively in Italy, devoting much of his time to writing biblical commentaries. In 1328 he returned to the home of his benefactor in Fermo.⁷ There he edited his principal work, the *Compositions of Immanuel*: twenty-eight chapters in flowery Hebrew, alternating rhymed prose and metrical poetry and describing a wealth of subjects in a variety of genres: poems, riddles, epigrams and epistles. These compositions are unrivalled for

⁴ BARZILAY, *Between Reason and Faith*, esp. 218–222.

⁵ LEVIN, *Abraham Ibn Ezra*, 13.

⁶ IDEL, ‘Abraham Abulafia’, 233–255.

⁷ ALFIE, ‘Immanuel of Rome’, 307–329.

their hilarious word-play and their agile manipulation of the resources of the Hebrew language. The work was among the first Hebrew books printed in Italy (this was in Brescia in 1491).⁸

During the fourteenth century Immanuel's example was followed by other authors and poets like Moses da Rieti (1388–after 1460), rabbi of the local community of Rome and private physician to Pope Pius II. He adapted Hebrew literature even more to Italian standards: for instance, in his Hebrew poetry we find the *terzine* or *terza rima* of Dante's *Divina Commedia*, and his decasyllabic lines (*endecasillabo tronco*) mark the first appearance of overtly syllabic metre in Italian-Jewish cantos. Later Jewish literati succeeded in linking Hebrew and Italian poetic practice to such an artificial extent that some of their riddle poems constitute Hebrew lines when read from right to left, although from left to right the syllables can be read as Italian in Hebrew script. Undoubtedly, a unique process of acculturation of the Jewish elite had been set in motion. Leone di Vitale (1420–c. 1498), known by his honorific 'Messer Leon', is often considered to be a Renaissance archetype of combining Jewish tradition with cultural assimilation. His biographical data reveal that he served as a rabbi, a philosopher, an exegete, an educator and a physician. At various times during his life he resided and worked in some of the most important centres, including Ancona, Padua, Venice, Bologna, Mantua, and Naples. At the age of twenty-two he finished a Hebrew grammar with the title *Livnat ha-Saphir* ('The Pavement of Sapphire Stone', Ex. 24,10). At the same time he settled as a rabbi in Ancona and published strong letters advocating a stricter observance of Jewish regulations. He was also licensed to practise medicine, and his successful activities in this field brought him much acclaim. In Ancona he also opened his own academy in which Jewish students, while receiving a thorough Jewish education, could be trained in the secular disciplines necessary for higher studies in the humanities, in philosophy, and in medicine. His grammar book seems to be the first of a series of textbooks he designed for the use in his religio-secular curriculum. During his stay in Padua, he continued to teach and practise medicine at the university, and in 1470 he conferred the degrees of doctor of liberal arts and of medicine. Apparently, he had

⁸ PAGIS, *Change and Tradition*, 260–273; CARMİ, *The Penguin Book of Hebrew Verse*, 421–422; PAGIS, *Hebrew Poetry*, 1991), 58–60. Cf. also BEKKUM, 'What is Hebrew in the Hebrew Sonnet?', 95–107.

acquired so much prestige and fame that he had the right to confer the doctorate in a period which was unusually tolerant of Jews. David ben Judah Messer Leon wrote his aforementioned magnum opus during his residence in Mantua. There, he also wrote a treatise on the art of rhetoric in which the Graeco-Roman rhetorical doctrines are applied to the Hebrew Bible. This treatise, entitled *Sepher Nopheth Tzuphim* ('The Book of the Honeycomb's Flow', Ps. 19,10) offers a true *ars rhetorica* and a rhetorical interpretation of the *sensus litteralis* of the Hebrew Scriptures: an innovative accomplishment in the history of biblical studies and at the same time predominantly a demonstration of standard medieval Jewish thought.⁹

Mantua and Ferrara were some of the most important cities in Italy, with a total population of close to 100,000. So great was the influx of Spanish and Portuguese Jews that the limits of the city of Ferrara had to be enlarged in order to accommodate them. The number grew considerably after 1536, following the activities of the Inquisition against the Marranos: the New Christians, in Portugal. Such communal heterogeneity became evident in the variety of languages and scribal traditions. Each group used a different Hebrew script, and not always could one group understand the script of another. Understandably, multiplicity of languages among the Jews gave Hebrew a unique position as a common means of communication among the various groups. When a French scholar visited the Ashkenazic academy in Padua at the beginning of the sixteenth century, one source recounts, 'they conducted their dialectics in the academy in the holy tongue that he too might understand.' This was certainly one of the factors that helped to create a common Hebrew pronunciation among all the Italian Jews, with a decisive influence of the Italian language. Moreover, many manuscripts reveal that a Judaeo-Italian dialect existed in this period, although it never occupied among Jews of Central and Southern Italy the place that Yiddish had among North Italian Jews, since Italian Jews generally understood Italian well and knew how to use it.¹⁰ During most of the Renaissance period, the large Ashkenazic group that settled in North Italy used the Yiddish language.

It is this world which enables us to discern the ties between Jewish philosophy and Christian doctrine. The philosophical studies of the thirteenth century reveal contacts with Christian scholasticism repeat-

⁹ RABINOWITZ, *The Book of the Honeycomb's Flow*; TIROSH-ROTHSCHILD, *Between Worlds*.

¹⁰ MAYER MODENA, 'The Spoken Languages of the Jews', 307-316.

edly. Contact with Renaissance philosophy was not lacking, but it was not sufficient to bring about a swift renewal of medieval Jewish philosophy in the small Jewish community of Italy. Obviously Renaissance Jews were affected by the humanistic tendencies of Italian culture.¹¹

Levita

In this respect, the biography and literary heritage of one specific personality is instructive. His name is Elijah ben Asher Levita, born in 1469 in Neustettin, Germany. While still a youth, he moved to Italy, where he spent parts of his life in Padua, Venice and Rome. At a later age he returned for a couple of years to the German city of Isny in Württemberg. Subsequently he went to Rome, but there lost his complete library and all his possessions during the siege by Charles V in 1527. He went to Venice where he became proof-reader in the famous Hebrew publishing house of the Christian printer Daniel Bomberg. He died in Rome in 1549. Elijah ben Asher Levita was well versed in all the languages relevant to his Italian-Jewish milieu; he wrote several Hebrew grammars: one deals with the rules of noun and verb (Rome 1517), another outlines Hebrew grammar in rhymed verse. He also composed an alphabetical list of *hapax legomena* and exceptional Biblical words together with a lexicon of words from Aramaic Bible translations and a similar lexicon of Talmudic and medieval Hebrew vocabulary. He very often explains rare words with Yiddish or Italian-Jewish equivalents, thereby demonstrating the characteristic multilingualism of the Italian-Jewish society of his time. Furthermore, mostly during his years in Venice, he translated secular Italian stories and romances into Yiddish. Most famous is his poetic translation of the Italian *Buovo d'Antona*, which is originally based on the romance *Sir Bevis of Hampton*.¹² The Yiddish translation with the title *Bove-Bukh* was composed in 1507 and published in 1541. Such Yiddish translations of secular Italian literature indicate beyond doubt that Elijah ben Asher Levita felt himself part of the broader society, and wished other Jews to be part of it too.¹³ Some of his works are not written specifically for

¹¹ ZINBERG, *A History of Jewish Literature*.

¹² HERZMAN, DRAKE & SALISBURY, *Four Romances of England*.

¹³ One of the most important Yiddish rhymed novellas is *Paris un' Viena*, composed of 717 metrical strophes and written in elegant sixteenth-century Italian

Jews but for Christian readers. He expected his writings on the Hebrew Bible and language to be accepted and studied by Christian Humanists, who increasingly were ready to learn Hebrew grammar. Elijah ben Asher Levita is called 'the father of Christian Hebraists' and actually taught Hebrew to Christian Hebraists like the Franciscan—and later Protestant—Sebastian Münster (1489–1552). Already in 1520 Münster edited his own concise Hebrew grammar *Epitome Hebraicae Grammaticae* in Basel, drawing heavily upon Levita's grammatical studies. For his part also, the Lutheran Hebraist Paulus Fagius (1504–1549) studied with De Levita and published Latin versions of his master's lexica and grammars.¹⁴

Sphorno

Elsewhere in Italy we find Obadiah ben Jacob Sphorno, born in Cesena in 1470. Sphorno was a very talented scholar who studied the entire curriculum of the seven liberal arts in Rome. He composed a work called *The Light of the Peoples*, a typical scholastic treatise with Averroes and Aristotle most often named as authorities. In full accordance with his Christian colleagues, a Jewish thinker like Sphorno had been brought up in an Aristotelian culture. So little was there that is distinctively Jewish that the author published a Latin version in 1548 for a Christian audience. Cleverly enough, he dropped all references to the Talmud. Sphorno was famous because of his exegetical treatises in which he preferred plain, literal explanations of Bible passages with extensive use of philological argumentation. Before leaving Bologna where he founded his private school of Hebrew studies, Sphorno met Johannes Reuchlin (1455–1522) whom he taught Hebrew during the years 1498–1500. Reuchlin was a prominent German Humanist who had friends all over Europe, and it was upon Sphorno's instruction that Reuchlin's profound

Yiddish. The work is based on a very popular book in Italian about the seemingly impossible love affair between Viena, the beautiful daughter of king Dolfín, and Paris, a brave knight and son of a lower-ranking vassal. Christian details are carefully eliminated and replaced by Jewish modes of speech or behaviour. For a long time it was assumed that Eliah de Levita was the author. But this is considered very unlikely, see the recently discovered version of the Catholic Seminary of Verona edited as SHMERUK and TIMM, *Paris un' Viena*.

¹⁴ KLEINER, *The Attitude of the Strasbourg Reformers*, 138–180.

knowledge of Jewish literature was based.¹⁵ Back in his native land, Reuchlin and his Humanist circle took up arms in defence of the Talmud which had been condemned by the Dominicans as a consequence of the libels of the notorious Jewish apostate from Cologne, Johannes Pfefferkorn.¹⁶ The matter was even brought before emperor Maximilian I who ordered the accusations to be investigated. Reuchlin succeeded in convincing the emperor of the falsehood of the arguments of those who wished all Jewish manuscripts and books to be burned. Thanks to Reuchlin's *Ratschlag* ('Advice'), all bans against the Talmud were lifted, and in 1520 printing of the Babylonian and Palestinian Talmuds was temporarily permitted by Pope Leo X.¹⁷

Leone Ebreo

Leone Ebreo was a true Renaissance philosopher. Born in Spain, he came under the influence of Italian culture only during his maturity. He was the son of Isaac Abravanel, the statesman and philosopher who personally tried to dissuade the catholic kings Ferdinand and Isabella from expelling all Jews in Spain. He did not succeed and was forced to leave for Portugal. His son Leone (1460–after 1521) was then about 30 years old. After his arrival in Italy he wrote a remarkable and imaginative book called *Dialoghi d'Amore* ('Dialogue on Love').¹⁸ Clearly the book was not written for other Spanish exiles but for the members of an enlightened philosophic circle; he was not content to use Latin but instead composed the work in Italian. In accordance with the Renaissance faith in the unity of truth which had been given to all mankind, he even discussed ancient pagan myths and offered philosophical interpretations. For Leone beauty is of the essence of the world, and it takes on a metaphysical meaning in his system. Like Plato, he makes the beauties of bodies dependent upon the Ideas which they embody and, although he refrains from subsuming God under the category of beauty, God is the source of it. He is the one who apportions beauty, and He is superior to beauty. Love is the central doctrine of his system, and his conceptions

¹⁵ DAN, 'The Kabbalah of Johannes Reuchlin', 55–83.

¹⁶ KIM, *Das Bild von Juden in Deutschland*.

¹⁷ REUCHLIN, *Ratschlag*; SIMONSOHN, *The Apostolic See and the Jews*.

¹⁸ FRIEDBERG-SEELEY & BARNES, *The Philosophy of Love*; DORMAN, *Dialoghi d'Amore*.

of love: metaphysical and universal love, rest on a mixture of Jewish foundations, Plato and Plotinus. Leone's relation to Judaism does not seem to differ from that of medieval thinkers. Although the notion of love as the soul of the world was close to pantheism, the decisive step was not taken by him. Jewish faith, a medieval world view, and a new feeling for the contemporary world which had been aroused by renewed contact with the world of antiquity were in his consciousness brought into a unified whole.¹⁹

Elijah del Medigo

An example of actual contact between Jewish scholars and the leaders of contemporary thought and learning was Elijah ben Moses Abba del Medigo (1458–1493) who introduced Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) into Hebrew and Aramaic studies and into the world of Qabbalah. Del Medigo was a native of the island of Crete which had for some time been under Venetian rule. Therefore, it was natural for him to find his way to Venice. He had access to Hebrew, Greek and Latin literature and by his publication of a philosophical treatise on the *Efficiency of the Universe*, composed in Venice in 1490, he earned himself some reputation as an Aristotelian philosopher.²⁰ In his little work *The Examination of Religion*, composed at Candia in 1490, Del Medigo follows Maimonides and defends the Averroist thesis that philosophy and religion represent two distinct spheres with distinct methodologies. Any attempt to harmonize the two by presenting some sort of 'middle way' does damage to both and to their respective audiences. Elijah del Medigo believes that the fundamental principles of religion such as the existence, unity and incorporeality of God are taught both by religion and philosophy: the former through dialectic and rhetoric to the multitude, the latter through demonstration to the wise. Del Medigo identifies the true religion with Rabbinic Judaism and polemicizes against Christianity and Qabbalah. After 1490 he was invited to the university of Padua. There he met Pico della Mirandola who brought him to Florence

¹⁹ PINES, 'Medieval Doctrines in Renaissance Garb?', 365–398; SIRAT, *A History of Jewish Philosophy*, 407–410; FELMAN, '1492: A House Divided', 38–58. Cf. Miguel de Cervantes in the prologue of *Don Quixote*: 'If you would speak of love, turn to Leo Hebraeus; he will instruct you in full measure.'

²⁰ GEFFEN, 'Insights into the life and thought of Elijah Medigo', 69–86.

and introduced him into the Florentine circle of scholars and Humanists in order to discuss with them matters of philosophy and science. The Jew Del Medigo participated in general academic and aristocratic life, but the Christian Pico was at the same time an expert of Qabbalah albeit for his own specific purpose: to integrate Jewish mysticism into Christian mysticism and to use qabbalistic Bible exegesis as a testimony of Christian faith.²¹ Del Medigo was not always very happy about Pico's attempts to integrate Platonism, Qabbalah and the Hermetic tradition with Aristotelism. Pico's syncretism was equally condemned by the Jew Del Medigo as an Aristotelian and by the Christian Marsilio Ficino as a Platonist.²² When Del Medigo speaks of his resentment against 'pseudo-philosophers' whose commitment to philosophy and religion (including the religious laws) is suspect, he could have had Pico in mind as well.²³

One of his descendants, Joseph Solomon del Medigo (1591–1655), should not be left unmentioned. This Del Medigo was a student of Galileo and had absorbed the new astronomical theories. His attitude was in many ways very different from that of his ancestor Elijah, being much more ambivalent and much more restless. He doubted Aristotelian concepts, and did not accept Aristotle's ideas about form (one does not need form as an efficient cause, because matter is not a passive substrate, as Aristotle had thought. All change is caused by the qualitative determinations of matter: a doctrine which has consequences for the theory of soul). He listed only three elements: water, earth, and air. Most of his innovations were based upon the certainty which Joseph del Medigo found in natural sciences. However, instead of constructing his own doctrine, he relied on various ideas and notions.²⁴ No apodictic conclusions were drawn by this and other, let us say, pre-Spinozic philosophers who certainly could not, like Spinoza, leave the interpretation and validation of Judaism in philosophical terms behind.²⁵

²¹ On the influence of Giovanni Pico della Mirandola and Johannes Reuchlin on Francesco Zorzi (1467–1540), see: BUSI, 'Francesco Zorzi', 97–125.

²² HANKINS, 'Galileo, Ficino and Renaissance Platonism', 209–237.

²³ KIBRE, *The Library of Pico della Mirandola*; GARIN, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*; MONNERJAHN, *Giovanni Pico della Mirandola*; WIRSZUBSKI, *Pico della Mirandola's Encounter*; REICHERT, 'Pico della Mirandola', 195–207; BERGQUIST, 'Christian Hebrew Scholarship', 224–233.

²⁴ BARZILAY, *Yoseph Shlomo Delmedigo*.

²⁵ ISRAEL, *Radical Enlightenment*.

Leon Modena

Rather for the sake of historical atmosphere, I would like to mention a person from a later period: Rabbi Leon Modena (1571–1648) who acquired fame among contemporary Jews as well as Christians.²⁶ His ancestors belonged to a family of money lenders who left northern Europe and were awarded residential and professional privileges in the city of Modena. When he married his cousin Esther in Venice in 1590, Modena settled in the Venetian ghetto and tried to earn his living as teacher, preacher, rabbi and scribe. He even turns to the gambling table in order to seek additional income. In his autobiography Leon Modena extensively describes life in the ghetto which had existed since 1516, showing the physical, social and cultural conditions of the people living within such a limited space. The ghetto imposed a barrier between Jews and Christians, but the gates were open during the daylight hours, and people moved in and out freely. Leon Modena himself used to go outside the ghetto for a number of activities: to shop for books, to work in the printshop, to visit friends, to give instruction to students, and to gamble. Also, conversely, gentiles frequented the ghetto out of curiosity or to listen to rabbi Leon Modena's famous sermons and teachings.²⁷ He himself boasts that he succeeded in attracting an audience of noblemen, preachers and scholars to see him perform in synagogue. However, his personal life and that of his family is marked by death, illness and violence. His eldest son Mordecai was poisoned by alchemical experiments; his youngest son Zebulun was beaten to death by his Jewish gang friends, and the middle son Isaac was advised to stay away from home because of criminal behaviour. Modena's personal status made him extremely sensitive to the tenuous nature of Jewish collective security in Venice. One offence against Christendom, and the entire community could be punished with heavy taxes or expulsion. Leon Modena experienced this lessening of tolerance and the increasing contempt for all Jews in Italy.²⁸

²⁶ COHEN, *The Autobiography*; RUDERMAN, *Essential Papers*; SIPORIN, 'A Map to the World's First Ghetto', 1–13.

²⁷ WEINBERG, 'Preaching in the Venetian Ghetto', 105–128.

²⁸ ROTH, *The History of the Jews of Italy*, 289–309; BONFIL, 'Change in Cultural Patterns', 11–30.

Judah Moscato

In the second half of the sixteenth century Platonism gained new popularity, and one remarkable man devoted much attention to its views. His name was Judah Moscato (1532–1590), a rabbi, philosopher and rhetorician at Mantua. He played a considerable part in the harmonization of a rich variety of sources and influences. His schooling comprised the Bible, the rabbinical and classical literature, philosophy, linguistics, rhetorics, musicology and Qabbalah. Moscato's erudition was encyclopedic, and to analyze his sources would be to cite many passages in Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, Latin and Italian. However, although he lived until two generations after Copernicus, he continues to speak of the earth as the center of the universe. Therefore one cannot sense any progress in his knowledge of astrology. The Neoplatonic speculations in Moscato's writings were more powerful than those of his Florentine predecessors Leone Ebreo and Yohanan Alemanno (1435–1504) who at a certain moment replaced Del Medigo as the teacher of Pico.²⁹ His studies, commentaries and sermons reveal his preoccupation with man as a microcosmos 'filling' the whole universe. Just as the mind of man is a reflection of the totality of being, so too the body is parallel in structure to that of the universe. In this connection it is worthwhile to note that Moscato's ideas display a clear influence of both Platonism and Qabbalah: to some extent a characteristic of the intellectual milieu of Mantua around the middle of the sixteenth century among both Christians and Jews. In his biblical commentaries mystical elements are cultivated together with other techniques of Jewish exegesis, such as the study of numerical values or forms of letters. In his view, the esoteric wisdom of the Qabbalah promised a revelation of the secrets of the universe, hence his constant preoccupation with the problem of the soul and its immortality, and the numerous allegories he discovers in the Bible

²⁹ Yohanan Alemanno was one of the Jewish philosophers after Ibn Gabirol or Avicbron who studied Neoplatonic sources. He glossed an early pseudo-Empedoclean text and added his expositions. In discussing messianic concepts he assumes that the spiritual emanation of the souls in the days of the Messiah will stem from the Universal Intellect and not from the Universal Soul. Redemption is spiritual and individual rather than national and political in the context of Neoplatonic discourse, cf. IDEL, 'Types of Redemptive Activities', 253–279, esp. 258–262. See also IDEL, *Messianic Mystics*, 52–53.

and rabbinic lore. Although Moscato shows a positive attitude toward secular learning, he considers the sciences as an intrinsic part of Judaism. Sciences were admitted but could not replace the truth of Judaism. Moscato too was a true son of his time and generation.³⁰

Conclusion

Thus far we have seen the impact of the spirit of Renaissance on those Jews who became prominent in general life; the cross-fertilization was, however, not confined to those prominent layers in society. In the main cities of Italy we discern a general social rapprochement between Jews and Christians which brought about a gradual loosening of religious observance on the one hand; on the other, however, this rapprochement removed many factors that historically had led Jews to conversion. It was possible for Jews to have social contacts with Italian society at large without abandoning their Jewish tradition and faith totally—a true form of acculturation. Renaissance Italy was therefore a remarkable exception in Jewish existence. The pursuit of secular studies was and remained an outstanding feature of Jewish life in Italy, and Jewish scholarship tried to come close to the ideal of the *uomo universale* as in the case of Judah Messer Leon. At no time did Italian Jews withdraw from the general culture. On the contrary, the number of Jews attending schools and universities increased, and many came under the influence of the great awakening of knowledge concerning classical antiquity, arts, philosophy, literature, and the sciences. They were affected by the cultural trends of the time: notably music, dance, and theatre.³¹ Though Renaissance people in so many respects, most of the philosophers were orientated to the essentially medieval Jewish tradition. The ugly side of this observation lies in the fact that the period under discussion never lacked incitement to action against the Jews, culminating during the fifteenth century in the system of the *Monti di Pietà* ('Funds of Piety'), as they were termed, directed against the economic prosperity of Jewish families who were forced to make large donations. Even worse in this respect

³⁰ BETTAN, 'The Sermons of Judah Moscato', 297–326. For the continuing influence of Jewish thought and the use of the Kabbalah in Italy, see SILVIA DE LEÓN-JONES, *Giordano Bruno and the Kabbalah*, 6–16.

³¹ STOW, *The Jews in Rome*; STOW, *Theatre of Acculturation*.

was a later period: the sixteenth century when, during the Counter-Reformation, Church authorities turned into zealous fanatics, who did everything to make Italian-Jewish life miserable. Conversion sermons were widespread during this period, and in Rome the institution of these so-called Jews' sermons had the longest survival, lasting even into the modern age.³² A remarkable episode was a disputation in Ferrara that could have taken place some time between 1487 and 1490. In preparation of the discussion, Abraham Farissol (1452–1528), born at Avignon and a distinguished scholar and writer at the court of duke Ercole d'Este, composed his book entitled *The Shield of Abraham* or *The Dispute on Religion*. Farissol dealt with the main doctrines of Christianity which were so often justified by Christians with textual arguments drawn from the Hebrew Bible. He rebutted them with logical and exegetical argumentation. Other parts of this work are apologetic, defending both the teachings of Judaism and the Jewish community in its relations with Christians.³³ His polemical work and that of others could not prevent Jewish rights from being severely limited. The climax of this outburst of anti-Jewish activities was the establishment of the ghettos: assuredly a symbol of complete regression in Christian European civilization, and one of the too many gruesome tragedies in the course of Jewish history. Unfortunately, Jews had to wait for new times to come, in countries other than Italy, in order to gain formal acceptance and emancipation.

³² FOA, 'Converts and *Conversos*', 109–129.

³³ RUDERMAN, *The World of a Renaissance Jew*.

POUND'S HUMANISTIC PARADIGM FOR THE REJUVENATION OF MODERN POETICS

Charlotte Ward

Introduction: anecdotal epiphanies

In a recently published book, *Practicing New Historicism*, Catherine Gallagher and Stephen Greenblatt review the achievements of this critical approach over the last twenty years. They show that sharp focus on neglected details proves the value of seemingly marginal texts or anecdotal epiphanies in reshaping historical concepts profoundly. Pound's method of 'Luminous Detail' is specifically cited.¹ What follows is an example of this methodology.

In his book *Ezra Pound and the Troubadour Tradition*, Stuart McDougal judged that such words as 'plasmatur' and 'venust' in Ezra Pound's translation of the troubadour Girart Bornello were of French influence, in contrast to the archaisms of the Arnaut Daniel translations: 'O PLASMATOUR and true celestial light', begins the alba 'Reis glorios, verais lums e clartatz' ('Glorious King, true light and clarity'), and its last stanza has 'With her venust and noblest to my make'.² But I immediately recognized these words from my reading of the earliest translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* into English by the Scottish Chaucerian Gavin Douglas, Bishop of Dunkeld, in 1513.³ Since MacDougal's study had been approved as a doctoral thesis at Pound's own alma mater the University of Pennsylvania two years before, I was puzzled that such a misconception could have slipped through

¹ GALLAGHER and GREENBLAT, *Practicing New Historicism*, 15; POUND, 'I Gather the Limbs of Osiris, II', 10.6 (December 7, 1911), 130; *Selected Prose*, 26.

² MCDUGAL, *Ezra Pound and the Troubadour Tradition*, 114, 123; POUND, 'Langue d'Oc', *Personæ*; GUIRAUT DE BORNELH, 'que.us mi rendes per leial companhia', ed. Kolsen, ll. 1 and 24, 342-44. Troubadour names are listed as spelled in R.A. Taylor's bibliography.

³ DOUGLAS, *Eneados*, ed. Small, 'The Proloug of the Tenth Buik': 'Hie *plasmatur* of thingis vniuersall' ('High creator of things universal', Vol. III, l. 1, 271); 'The Proloug of the Twelt Buik', 'The variant vestur of the *venust* vaill' ('The variant covering of the beautiful veil'), Vol. IV, l. 31, 82, 'Ilk byrd reiosyng with thar myrthfull *makis*' ('Each bird rejoicing with their mirthful mates', Vol. IV, l. 16, 85). The prologues are the creation of Douglas, without source in Virgil's Latin.

a number of readers. Was the thinking that if it is not in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, then it does not exist in English? At the time I put it down to modern literary critics not knowing the history of dictionaries, not knowing that Scottish words uncommon outside Scotland had been relegated to the *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, devoted to this English regional use since 1931.

McDougal's book received favorable reviews in *Literary Journal* by Walter W. Waring, 98 (April 1, 1973), 1168; *Prairie Schooner* by W.G. Regier, 68 (Fall 1973), 276; *Humanities Association Review* by Elizabeth Greene (Spring 1974), 176-7, *American Literature* by Jonathan Saviile, 46.2 (May 1974), 235-6, and *Southern Humanities Review* by Hugh Witemeyer, 83 (Summer 1974), 406-8, although further background was requested. Even Peter Makin's negative review in *Modern Language Review*, 70.3 (July 1975), 615-17, did not attack the assertion, and Makin had written a Ph.D. thesis on the same subject at King's College, London, that very year, later published as *Provence and Pound* (Berkeley 1978). Jerome Mazzaro at least had the right intuition when his review quoted Ben Jonson's opinion of Spenser's archaisms: 'affecting the ancients, he writ no language' (*Criticism* 16, 1974), 86. But again, the implication was that Pound had invented this diction. Scholars repeated the conclusion for twenty years, such as Ronnie Apter in her American University thesis, published as *Digging for the Treasure: Translation after Pound* (Washington, D.C., 1984), calling these words 'pseudo-archaic excursions' (48). Even a critic who had written an article on Gavin Douglas in the Pound periodical *Paideuma*, 9.3, Ronald E. Thomas, "'Ere He His Goddis Brocht in Latio": On Pound's Appreciation of Gavin Douglas' (Winter 1980), 509-17, failed to catch Apter's mistake about neologisms when he reviewed her book in the same periodical, 16.1 (Spring 1986), 141-3.

Pound's use of Gavin Douglas

My 1981 Harvard thesis three years before Apter's book had revealed that these Scottish words were in fact the tip of the iceberg. McDougal had assumed Pound's projected volume of translations from the troubadour Arnaut Daniel had been lost forever (113), but unpublished papers at Yale University allowed me to reconstruct them, and the vocabulary borrowed from Gavin Douglas was even more obvious. On the facing page of the series 'Langue d'Oc' across from the

Girart Bornello translation was a translation of Guilhem de Peitieu's 'Ab la dolchor del temps novel' ('When the springtime is sweet'), and the word 'gesning' in line 18, 'And she gave me such gesning', was also from Douglas' translation, where Turnus asks Hercules' help, 'Be my faderis gestnyng' ('By my father's hospitality').⁴ Pound used the word again in his 1917 translation of Arnaut Daniel's XI. 'En breu brisal temps braus' ('Briefly bursteth season brisk'), which I published for the first time in 1985 within the deluxe limited edition *Ezra Pound, Forked Branches: Translations of Medieval Poems*: 'Of her whose gesning most avaieth'. ('De lieis don plus vuouill quem cuoilla;' l.28).⁵ The literal meaning of *don* here is not 'gift' but 'of whom', 'Of her whom I most want that she receive me', yet Arnaut Daniel's double entendres are well documented, and the overall meaning is the same. 'Venust' was a variant for line 30 of the 1917 II. 'Chansson doil mot son plan e prim' ('A song where words run gimp and straight'), 'For her to screen that *venust* queen' ('Bona dompna ves cui ador', 'Good lady whom I adore'), but publication of this fact had to await my variorum edition *Pound's Translations of Arnaut Daniel* (New York 1991). The entire alliterating couplet in uneven syllable-count reads, 'The variant vestur of the venust vail/Schrowdis the scherald fur, and every fail'. This is an example of the nature description so praised in Gavin Douglas, meaning 'the variable coloring of the beautiful veil/Shrouds the newly mown furrow, and every turf'. At last in 1996, Helen May Dennis credited 'gesning' to Douglas in her book *A New Approach to the Poetry of Ezra Pound through the Medieval Provençal Aspect* (Lewiston, ME), 154.

Contrary to what most Pound critics have thought, these archaisms were more prominent in the 1917 translations than the first versions published in *New Age* in 1911–12, or the prose cribs in *The Spirit of Romance* of 1910. Gavin Douglas is far more arcane than the Wardour Street English affected by such Pre-Raphaelite translators as William Morris. The obvious question is 'Why?' These words are more appropriate to Arnaut Daniel's *trobar ric* or *trobar clus* ('rich' or 'closed composition') than to Giraut's *trobar leu* ('open composition'). The *tenso* between Guiraut and Raimbaut d'Aurenga treats these concepts.⁶ Dante

⁴ GUILHEM DE PEITIEU, 'E que.m donet un *don* tan gran', ed. Jeanroy, l. 21, 25; *Eneados*, 'Tenth Buik', Vol. III, l. 8, 315.

⁵ ARNAUT DANIEL's text is from *Translations of Ezra Pound*, based on the edition of U.A. Canello, with occasional readings from Lavaud.

⁶ See SPENCE, 'Rhetoric and Hermeneutics', 174–4.

had found Arnaut Daniel so challenging to translate that he quoted him in the original Provençal within the 'Purgatorio', XXVI, ll. 140f. The difficulty and unusual alliteration of Arnaut Daniel had been noted by Professor W.P. Ker, whom Pound actually met in London. The article is 'Dante, Guido Guinicelli, and Arnaut Daniel', *Modern Language Review*, 4.2 (1909), 149. The idea was treated at greater length by Martin Scholz, 'Die Alliteration in der altprovenzalischen Lyrik', *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 38 (1913), 311-43. A popularizing book of the time was Justin H. Smith, *The Troubadours at Home* (New York 1899). There a Provençal poem is compared to one by the famous Scots dialect poet Robert Burns, and the nineteenth century American poet Sidney Lanier is recommended for his metrical theories (II, 14; I, 246). Douglas was a particular favorite of Lanier. In his book *Shakspeare and his Forerunners* [sic], Vol. I (New York 1902, 1966), Lanier had said that Gavin Douglas' picture of nature was more clarified than Chaucer's and that the student of Anglo-Saxon would find many words in purer form there than in England (Vol. I, 61-62). This may be the origin of Pound's interest in Gavin Douglas.

Pound acquired his copy of Gavin Douglas' works some time around October 9-11, 1917, because that is when he wrote to the editor of the *Little Review*, Margaret Anderson, 'I have had a lucky day and found a copy of Gavin Douglas, really better luck than one might have expected' (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee). A letter to Professor Norman Holmes Pearson at Yale forty years later identifies the exact edition: Thomas Ruddiman, 1710 (January 5, 1958). It could have been serendipity, such as Robert Browning's finding of the old yellow book for *The Ring and the Book* on a Florentine stall, or the discovery of Edward Fitzgerald's translation of Omar Khayyám, the *Rubáiyát*, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Pound collected old editions and campaigned for forgotten authors who had discovered something new.

Gavin Douglas' translation seems pre-Renaissance in its copying of Chaucerian imagery, its participation in the Middle English alliterative revival of the North. It is analogous to the art admired by the Pre-Raphaelites, who emulated painting just prior to Raphael, because they thought his dominance in art instruction was too great, and they preferred natural or stylized diaper backgrounds to architectural two-point perspective. The Pre-Raphaelite painter Rossetti had been for Pound an inspirational translator of early Italian and Old French. 'Alba Innominata', an anonymous *alba* in the 'Langue d'Oc' series that translates Guirart de Bornello's *alba* 'En un vergier

sotz fuella d'albespi' ('In orchard under the hawthorne'), originally in 1909 had as refrain a line from the Pre-Raphaelite poet Algernon Charles Swinburne's 'In the Orchard', 'Ah God, ah God that day should be so soon!' reading, 'Ah, God! Ah, God! That *dawn* should *come* so soon'. By 1918 Pound had changed the line to, 'God how swift the night,/And day comes on'. In his attempt to break the pentameter, Pound would certainly have preferred the irregular line of Gavin Douglas' translation to the iambic pentameter blank verse created by Surrey for his slightly later (1538–44) and more influential translation of the *Aeneid*. But in fact Surrey's translation of Virgil is indebted to Douglas.⁷ Donald Hall has cited Provençal and Anglo-Saxon among the alien means Pound used to reform the standard English line,⁸ but it is more likely to have been the equivalent to Provençal and Anglo-Saxon he had found, in Gavin Douglas. Charles Homer Haskins' *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge, MA 1927) would not be published for another twenty years, but Pound's comments in *The Spirit of Romance* make it obvious that he considered the troubadours the product of an earlier Renaissance: 'The Twelfth Century, or more exactly, that century whose center is the year 1200, has left us two perfect gifts: the church of San Zeno in Verona, and the canzoni of Arnaut Daniel' (22).

Pound did by no means attempt to hide his indebtedness to Gavin Douglas. Douglas is already referred to in his essay 'Elizabethan Classicists I', published in *The Egoist*, 4.8 (September 1917), 245, in a highly favorable manner: 'I am inclined to think he gets more poetry out of Virgil than any other translator'. In the 1920 *Instigations* he turns to the Latin translator again to say, 'a great poet has compensated by his own skill, any loss in transition' (240). By 1929 in 'How to Read', Pound went so far as to call Gavin Douglas 'better than the original'.⁹ In his *Active Anthology* of 1933, Pound was lamenting that Gavin Douglas' translation had not been reprinted, so he included an extract in *ABC of Reading* the following year and judged, 'Gavin Douglas, set on a particular labour, with his mind full of quantitative metre, attains a robuster versification than you are likely to find in Chaucer' (115), and 'in such passages as this I get considerably

⁷ POUND, *Exhultations*, ed. King, 48. 125; SWINBURNE, *Poems and Ballads*, ed. Gosse and Wise, Vol. I, 102–3; BARTSCH, 'Oï deüs, oï deüs, de l'alba! tan tòst ve', *Chrestomatie*, l. 4,101; RIDLEY, *The 'Aeneid' of Henry Howard*, 13–29.

⁸ HALL, 'Pound's Sounds', ll.

⁹ *New York Herald Tribune of Books; Literary Essays*, 35.

more pleasure from the Bishop of Dunkeld than from the original highly cultured but non-seafaring author' (118).

Presumably Douglas is thought to be 'sea-faring' because his alliteration reminds Pound of the Anglo-Saxon 'Seafarer' translation for which he was so criticized for years, first published in 'I Gather the Limbs of Osiris, I', *New Age*, 10.5 (30 November 1911), 107, because he sometimes sacrificed sense to sound. The harshest judgments are those of Kenneth Sisam in the *London Times Literary Supplement* (June 25, 1954), 409. The most thorough and most favourable evaluations have been those of Fred C. Robinson. Even in Pound's translation of Anglo-Saxon there is a link with Provençal. *Sumeres weard* ('guardian of summer'), l. 54, was rendered by Pound, 'He singeth summer-ward'. Swinburne has the Italian chaplain Rizzio, confessor of Mary Queen of Scots, recite a sestina just before he is murdered by her husband Darnley, and the key line before is, 'Look out and lift up heart to summer-ward'.¹⁰ Pound's sonic 'mistake' was copied by the eminent folklorist Stith Thompson in his translation for *Old English Poems*: 'The summer-ward sings, sorrow foretelling' (l. 54, 70). 'Fragment from an Anglo-Saxon Charm', an undergraduate translation by Pound, first published by me,¹¹ is proof Pound could be perfectly literal if he chose to be.

This preference for Douglas over the original led Pound to quote Douglas in Canto 78 of his longest work: 'and belt the citye quahr of nobil fame/the lateyn peopil taken has their name' (478, ll. 33-34). In *Guide to Kulchur*, 1952, Pound claimed, 'we forget Virgil in reading from Gavin's *Aeneids* and know only the tempest, Acheron, and the eternal elements that Virgil for most men glazes over' (249). In 1954 Pound was still recommending Gavin Douglas and other pre-Shakespearean translators to the Polish scholar Victor Jankowski.¹² Pound's esteem for Douglas was virtually life-long.

Historical scholarship and medieval arcana

Then why have critics ignored Gavin Douglas in analyzing Pound? Kathryne Lindberg in her book *Reading Pound Reading: Modernism after*

¹⁰ ROBINSON, 'Tomb of Beowulf'; SWINBURNE, *Bothwell*, Act I Scene I, ed. Gosse and Wise, Vol. VIII, l. 2, 156, 168.

¹¹ 'Translations. Ezra Pound', *Iowa Review*, 38, rpt. *Ezra Pound, Forked Branches*, 3.

¹² 'Ezra Pound's Letters to a Polish Scholar'.

Nietzsche defined the problem. By calling Douglas 'marginal', she shows the state of our current university curriculum, where historical scholarship has been banished from the requirements of most literature departments and distant authors are branded 'irrelevant'. In the influential *Cambridge Companion to Ezra Pound*, Massimo Bacigalupo terms Pound's selection of Gavin Douglas 'idiosyncratic'.¹³ Modern critics wanted to find neologisms in Pound because they associated him with such avant-garde authors as James Joyce or Jules Laforgue. But Robert Briffault reminds us that Laforgue and Rimbaud themselves profited from the troubadours, in his book *Les Troubadours et le sentiment romanesque*.¹⁴

Fortunately, among practicing poets Pound has fared far better than he has in the academic world, and this includes his love of medieval arcana. In his book *The Influence of Ezra Pound*, K.L. Goodwin affirms that it was Pound who inspired the modern use of the sestina and the alliterative line.¹⁵ Twenty years later, Marjorie Perloff was even more generous. She called Pound's legacy indisputable in the precision of *le mot juste*, the breaking of the pentameter in favor of music, and the translation of the desired other.¹⁶ The recognition of these scholars is probably chiefly due to the authority of W.H. Auden, who said that he personally had gotten the sestina and the alliterative line from Pound.¹⁷

Charles Jernigan thought Pound had declined to translate Arnaut Daniel's sestina, the first ever known, because he thought there were better lost ones.¹⁸ Guy Davenport thought Pound judged it a convention empty of feeling.¹⁹ George Gugelberger thought Pound disliked his own sestina translation.²⁰ Pound's great influence presumably came from his imitation 'Sestina: Altaforte', put into the mouth of a different troubadour, the political manipulator Bertran de Born, inspired by the latter's 'Quan vei pe.ls vergiers despleiar'. Dante had placed him in *Inferno XXVIII*, ll. 112-42, for stirring up strife between the members of the royal family. The end-words of each line must

¹³ LINDBERG, *Reading Pound Reading*; BACIGALUPO, 'Pound as Critic', 201.

¹⁴ BRIFFAULT, *Les Troubadours et le sentiment romanesque*, 17.

¹⁵ GOODWIN, *The Influence of Ezra Pound*, 204, 207.

¹⁶ PERLOFF, 'The Contemporary of Our Grandchildren: Pound's Influence', 198.

¹⁷ See RUSSELL, 'Ezra Pound: the Last Years'.

¹⁸ JERNIGAN, 'The Song of Nail and Uncle', 130.

¹⁹ DAVENPORT, *Cities on Hills*, 141.

²⁰ GUGELBERGER, *Ezra Pound's Medievalism*.

be repeated in a different order for every stanza, inciting in a hortatory manner:

In hot summer have I great rejoicing
 When the tempests kill the earth's foul peace,
 And the lightnings from black heav'n flash crimson,
 And the fierce thunders roar me their music
 And the winds shriek through the clouds mad, opposing,
 And through all the riven skies God's swords clash.
 (Stanza II)

Jernigan, Davenport, Gugelberger, and others were misled. Pound did translate Arnaut Daniel's entire sestina—he just could not get it published. Publisher's bankruptcy (Swift's of London), publisher's inertia (Seymour in Chicago), loss in the mail (to the Clerk's Press of Cleveland), opposition from those who criticized his antiquarian interests, meant that only the first two stanzas as text for Walter Morse Rummel's musical transcription appeared in *Hesternæ Rosæ* (London 1913), the title borrowed from a small drawing of faded courtesans by Rossetti, at the Tate Gallery of London. The full translation, among papers I examined at the Yale Beinecke Library, was first published in *Iowa Review*, 12.1 (Winter 1982), 43–44, and was collected in *Forked Branches*. The first version translated *arma* (l. 3) as 'arms', the second as 'soul's', a legitimate pun recognized by Jernigan. In 'Lo ferm voler' ('The strong desire'), the poet ruminates incessantly as to how he can get into the premises of his lady. The repeated words are psychologically effective for such a theme.

W.H. Auden's sestina 'Paysage Moralisé' dates from 1933–38. It is a meditation on urban blight, written in hendecasyllables, given meter by alliteration, which is a leitmotif for the seafaring theme:

Héaring of hárvests rooting in valleys,
 Seeing at end of street the barren mountains,
 Round córners cóming suddenly on water,
 Knowing them shipwrecked who were launched for islands,
 We honour founders of these starving cities
 Whose honour is the image of our sorrow.²¹

Auden concludes that instead of longing to run off to Nature, like the Anglo-Saxon Seafarer and contemporary Georgian poets, we should make our environments more livable.

²¹ AUDEN, *Collected Shorter Poems 1927–1957*, 71–72.

Elizabeth Bishop wrote her poem 'Visit to St. Elizabeth's', the mental hospital in Washington, D.C. where Pound was interred, in 1950. She speaks of it in an unpublished correspondence with Robert Lowell at Houghton Library, Harvard University. Her 'Sestina' is a scene as a child after she has gone to live with her grandmother, following the death of her father and the institutionalization of her mother:

September rain falls on the house.
 In the failing light, the old grandmother
 sits in the kitchen with the child
 beside the little Marvel Stove,
 reading the jokes from the almanac,
 laughing and talking to hide her tears.²²

Very much in the manner of Arnaut Daniel's word-play with *oncle/on gla* ('uncle'/'fingernail') or *verga* as beating stick, twig, bodily part, Bishop plays with the word 'tears'. The child, Bishop herself, sees them as moon symbols in the almanac, condensation on the teakettle, drops inside the teacup, buttons on the coat of a man she has drawn (presumably her father). The child does not understand, but the grandmother concludes, 'Time to plant tears', not merely the advice of the almanac, but time to bury sorrow and concentrate on the child's future. The four-stress line without syllable-count is typical of Pound, and his source is older English texts or oral forms such as the ballad. Brazilian Portuguese would be the language Bishop most wanted to translate.

Diane Wakowski's 'Sestina from the Home Gardener' owes its theme to Elizabeth Bishop, but it returns to Arnaut Daniel more obviously by documenting the frustrations of love, surrealistically expressed:

These dried-out paint brushes which fell from my lips have been removed
 with your departure; they are such minute losses
 compared with the light bulb gone from my brain, the sections
 of chicken wire from my liver, the precise
 silver hammers in my ankles which delicately banged and pointed
 magnetically to you. Love has become unfamiliar.

The line is more uneven, but has a general iambic rhythm natural to spoken English. Its inclusion in the first edition of *The Norton*

²² BISHOP, *Complete Poems*, 145–6, 155; another sestina is 'A Miracle for Breakfast', 20.

Anthology of Modern Poetry represents canonization in the curriculum for the form.²³

Yet another poet known to have visited Pound at St. Elizabeth's mental hospital is W.S. Merwin.²⁴ Some of the lines in his translation of the Spanish *Poem of the Cid* seem inspired by Gavin Douglas because they are not exactly syllable-counted, relying rather on a balance of accents, with liberal, not obligatory, use of alliteration, and assonance near-rhymes: 'The Campeador rode up to the *inn*;/when he reached the portal he found it closed against *him*./ . . . A little girl of nine appeared in sight:/ 'Ah, Campeador in a good hour you first girded on *sword*!' ('El Campeador adeliño a su *posada*;/ así como llegó a la puorta, fallóla bien *cerrada*,/ . . . Una niña de nuef años a ojo se *parava*:/ 'Ya Campeador, en buena çinxiestes *espada*!').²⁵ This was one of Pound's favorite passages, which he had reconstructed freely in his Canto III, using the same dipodic rhythm and noticeable alliteration: 'My Cid rode up to Burgos,/Up to the studded gate between two towers,/Beat with his lance butt, and the child came out,/Una niña de nueve años' (11, ll. 20–23). Probably he read this very text to Merwin and inspired him to translate the entire work, which he had merely dipped into for *The Spirit of Romance*.

Merwin's own 'Sestina', dedicated to the poet Robert Graves, recalls a visit Merwin made to Majorca, where Graves lived. The second stanza echoes the opening of Pound's Canto XXXVI (1934), 177, his second attempt to translate the difficult philosophical *canzone* of the thirteenth century writer Guido Cavalcanti: 'A lady asks me/I speak *in season*!/ She seeks reason for an affect, *wild* often/That is so proud he hath Love for *a name*.'²⁶ Merwin seems to be referring to the unswerving devotion Pound had to the art of poetry, despite being misunderstood and incarcerated in a mental institution:

Have I not also willed to be heard *in season*?
Have I not heard anger raised in a song
And watched when many went out to a *wild* place

²³ WAKOWSKI, *Motorcycle Betrayal Poems*, rpt. *Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry*, ed. Ellmann and O'Clair, 1350–51.

²⁴ See FOLSOM, 'W.S. Merwin on Ezra Pound'.

²⁵ MERWIN, *Poem of the Cid*, ll. 5–6, 14–15, 41, prints the Spanish text on facing pages as edited by R. Menéndez Pidal, *Poema de Mio Cid*.

²⁶ Italian text in *Translations of Ezra Pound*: 'Donna mi priegha/perch'i voglio dire/D'un accident/che sovente/é fero/Ed é si altero/ch'è chiamato amore', 132, rpt. *Cavalcanti*, ed. Anderson without variants noted in my 1981 Harvard Ph.D. thesis.

And fought with the dark to make themselves *a name*?
 I have seen of those champions how thin a share
 After one night shook off their sleep at morning.²⁷

Merwin considers his own modern time the Dark Ages for poets. Other modern American poets indebted to Pound ultimately for their use of the sestina form are John Ashberry, William Dickey, Donald Justice, John Woods, Ronald Bottrall, Richard Lattimore, and James Crenner.²⁸

In his historical survey of the sestina, János Riesz believes the form would have died with Swinburne if it had not been for Pound. He quotes Donald Hall's parody of Pound's early *Cantos* draft, 'Hang it all, Ezra Pound, there is only the one sestina!' based on 'Hang it all, Robert Browning, / there can be but the one / "Sordello"'.²⁹ Miguel Edo, reviewing Martín de Riquer's edition of Arnaut Daniel, credits Pound with the dissemination of the sestina form in the Spanish-speaking-world. The title of his article, 'El arte del mejor "fabbro"', refers not only to the label given Arnaut Daniel in Dante's *Divina Commedia*, but to T.S. Eliot's dedication of *The Wasteland* to Pound, 'il miglior fabbro', 'the better craftsman'. As practitioners of the sestina, he cites Gil de Biedma, Franco Fortini, and the Catalán poet Joan Brossa. Without Pound, there would be few opportunities to market the troubadours, he concludes.

In Brazil, an entire poetic movement was founded around the word *noigandres*, which occurs in Arnaut Daniel's XIII. 'Er vei vermeils', l. 7. The word proved so tantalizingly difficult to Pound that he traveled all the way to Freiburg, Germany, to ask its meaning from Professor Emil Levy, author of the still standard Provençal dictionary. The visit is commemorated in Pound's Canto XX, 'You know for seex mon's of my life / Effery night when I go to bett, I say to myself: / Noigandres, eh, *noigandres*, / Now what the DEFFIL can that mean!³⁰ 'Pain ameises' was Pound's final guess. Augusto de Campos has translated all of Arnaut Daniel's works into Brazilian Portuguese, rhymed, in *Mais provençais*. They are not literal, but 'transcreations' (*transcrições*).

²⁷ MERWIN, *A Mask for Janus*, 48-9.

²⁸ ASHBERRY, 'Poem' (1956), *Some Trees*, *The Tennis Court Oath*; DICKEY, 'Etude', *Of the Festivity*; JUSTICE, 'A Dream Sestina', *The Summer Anniversaries*; WOODS, 'Sestina', *On the Morning of Color*; BOTTRALL, 'For Our Time', 'Ritornello', *Collected Poems*; LATTIMORE, *Sestina for a Far-off Summer*; CRENNER, 'Sestina', *The Aging Ghost*.

²⁹ RIESZ, *Die Sestine*, 212; HALL, *New Poets*, 96-7; POUND, 'Three Cantos', *Lustra*, 53, rpt. *Cantos II*, ll. 1-2, 6.

³⁰ POUND, 'Part of Canto XX', *Exile*, reprinted *Cantos*, ll. 1-4, 90.

The founder of the movement, Haroldo de Campos, has explained his word-playing translation of Goethe's *Faust* in 'Mephistofaustian Transluciferation'. Although Pound was criticized for the technique, the paper of Haroldo de Campos was well received at a colloquium on Poetics and Semiology at the Universidad Nacional de Mexico in 1981. In January 1956, four years after the founding of the Brazilian group 'Noigandres', the British poet and translator Stephen Spender reported a group of poets calling themselves 'Nine', inspired in the same way by Pound to use forms and music of the troubadours.³¹ Their collaboration did not continue like the Brazilians.'

The American poet and translator Paul Blackburn was an important protégé of Pound. According to David Gordon, Blackburn had shown his translations to Pound in 1953.³² The title of his volume of troubadour translations, *Proensa*, comes from the third chapter of Pound's *The Spirit of Romance*. The unusual feminine rhyme in Pound's translation of Arnaut Daniel XV. 'Sols sui qui sai lo sobrafan quem sortz' ('I only, and who elrische pain support', 1917), 'arrest it' (l. 7), was recycled in Blackburn's translation of Marcabru XXI. 'L' iverns vai': 'The cold and drizzle clink against,/the gentle season to *arrest it*' (60).³³ 'Elrische' had been borrowed by Pound from Gavin Douglas' *Eneados*: 'Thai *elriche* brethir, with thair lukis thrawin' ('The hideous brothers, with their distorted looks'), Book III, Chapter X, p. 161, l. 5, describing the island of the Cyclops. Blackburn had absorbed from Pound the Gavin Douglas word 'chirm' in his translation of the Monge de Montaudon, who mentions Arnaut Daniel: 'And the birds all *chirm*', 'Molt mi plas' (175).³⁴ The same root word in Arnaut Daniel's XI. 'En breu brisaral temps braus' is 'Car noi *chanta* anzels ni piula', rendered by Pound in 1917, '*Chirmes* now no bird nor cries querulous' (l. 5). 'If *chirme*, so no bird calleth' was a discarded sixth line in Pound's translation of III. 'Can chai la fueilla' ('When sere leaf falleth'), rendering 'Vei sordezir la brueilla' ('I notice the noise grows silent') more freely. The Middle Scots line was, 'And *chirme* of every birdis voce on far', Book III Chapter VI, l. 14, 141. Helenus is describing the dangers Æneus will face on his way to Italy from Troy.

³¹ SPENDER, 'Inchiesta su Ezra Pound e la poesia americani'.

³² See GORDON, 'Meeting E.P. and Then . . . '.

³³ MARCABRU, *Poésies complètes*, ed. Dejeanne: 'Lo freitz frim e la bruina/Contra la gentil sazo', ll. 10-11, 145.

³⁴ MONGE DE MONTAUDON, *Les Poésies*, ed. Routledge: 'e li auzelhet chanton: "Piu"', *Plazer* XII, l. 16, 102.

Another poet-translator inspired by Pound was Peter Whigham. He edited a volume called *The Music of the Troubadours*, which reprinted *Hesterna Rose* of Pound and Rummel, translated the musical theory of J.B. Beck they used, printed texts of the troubadour Guilhem IX, as well as new translations by John Niles. The edition is inscribed to Ford Madox Ford and Ezra Pound, and the dedicatory poem by Whigham is an imitation of Gavin Douglas' vocabulary, rhymed couplets, and frequent alliteration:

Lo! Ferlies befalleth where is love-gladness,
 'neath moon-sleight in orchard when pierceth love's madness.
 Silken the song, spun of air, in the dew,
 Tense with the immanent muse,
 And coins & castles, heaulmes & politics their song.
 Where now are the stones? Where is the bright hair of those women?
 Gone, all, the long-gone dead among.

The second word, 'ferlies', is found in Douglas' *Palice of Honour*, an imitation of Chaucer's *House of Fame*, an allegorical dream vision which mixes many mythologies: 'Skrymmorie *fery* gave me mony a clowre' ('Scudding fairies gave me many a blow', l. 4, 26). Villon's 'Belle Heulmiere' and 'Ballade des Dames du temps jadis', with its *ubi sunt* repeated questions, are alluded to, since Pound had written a Villon opera with these arias, performed in Paris.³⁵

The projected second volume in Whigham's series was to have contained music, text, and translations from the troubadours Peire Vidal, Peire Cardenal, Cercamon, and Cabestan. It never appeared, but a separately printed pamphlet by Whigham, entitled *My Douce Provence*, was printed by Doggeral & Mudborn Press in 1978. It is a translation of the mad Peire Vidal's XIX. 'Ab L'alen tir vas me l'aire/Qu'eu sen venir de Proensa' ('To breathe the air/of fair Provence/my thought makes dance'). Five lines from the end, Whigham's translation combines lines from two different Arnaut Daniel translations by Pound, no doubt inspired by Pound's free creation 'Piere Vidal Old', *Exultations*. The original lines 'E tot quan fauc d'avinen/Ai del seu bel cors plazen',³⁶ literally mean, 'And everything

³⁵ *François Villon*, ed. Longnon, 'Le Testament', 22. The best account of Pound's opera is SCHAFER, 'Ezra Pound and Music'. The 1974 Toronto Ph.D. thesis of Stephen Adams, by the same name, quotes unpublished materials in Schafer's hands. Houghton Library, Harvard University, has materials. Performances are detailed by GALLUP, *Ezra Pound: a Bibliography*.

³⁶ *Les Poésies de Peire Vidal*, ed. J. Anglade, ll. 26-27, 61.

pleasurable I make/I have from her lovely body', and Whigham has written 'whose *limbs lien* lay/to all that I say'. In Pound's 1911 translation of Arnaut Daniel's VI. 'D'autra guiz'e d'autra razon' ('In a new cause my song again'), Pound said, 'Hath a man rights at love? No grain,/Yet fools think they've some legal *lien*'. In Pound's 1917 translation of XII. 'Doutz brais e critz' ('Sweet cries and cracks'), he said, 'Where lamp-light with light *limb* but half engages'.³⁷ No doubt Pound's alliteration attracted Whigham, as well as the seven-line stanza common to 'Ab l'alén' and 'D'autra guiz'. The luminous detail 'quel remir' is recalled in *Cantos* 7, l. 1, 26, and 20, l. 26, 90, in relation to Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine and Professor Emil Levy, respectively.

A rare rapport between the academic and creative has been achieved by James J. Wilhelm. In addition to editing *The Poetry of Arnaut Daniel* and writing five books on Pound, such as *Il Miglior Fabbro: The Cult of the Difficult in Daniel, Dante, and Pound*, he has published three books of translations from medieval poetry: *Seven Troubadours: The Creators of Modern Verse, Medieval Song, and Lyrics of the Middle Ages*. Like Pound, he reworks his translations over and over, and he is obviously indebted to him in the second volume's translation of Arnaut Daniel IX. 'L'aura amara': 'The bitter bréeeze/Makes bránchy canopies/Rise light/That softened wafts once leafed', (169). Rhymes have been taken from Pound's 1917 translation 'The bitter air/Strips panoply/From trees/Where softer winds set leaves', which are absent from the original, 'L'aura amara/Fals bruoills brancutz/Clarzir/Quel doutz espeissa ab fuoills'. Wilhelm has increased the alliteration, probably remembering Pound's 1917 translation of XI. 'En breu brisalar temps braus', 'Briefly búrsteth season brisk'.

The poet-translator Charles Tomlinson mistakenly gives Pound's translation of the anonymous *alba* opening 'Langue d'Oc' to Arnaut Daniel within the *Oxford Book of Verse Translation* into English, which he edited. However, he does at least acknowledge Gavin Douglas as Pound's forebearer (xiii). Pound has been the inspiration of a great deal of activity, even when he himself is not acknowledged. A fellow member of the Imagist movement in the early part of the twentieth century, Richard Aldington, seems to have been inspired by Pound's advocacy of Gavin Douglas, because in the introduction to his trans-

³⁷ Pound's *Translations of Arnaut Daniel*, ed. Ward, 'Donc ha hom dreg en amor? Non;/Mas cuidaron so li fol', ll. 15-16, 10; 'E quel remir contral lum de la lampà', l. 32, 19, also in *Translations of Ezra Pound*, 174.

lation of the medieval French *Fifteen Joys of Marriage*, he describes the diction he sought as, 'a sort of archaistic English, something between Chaucer and the earliest Elizabethan translations'. Seeking to translate from one entire literary tradition into another, he renders 'si bonne galoise' ('such a good Welsh woman') as the Wife of Bath.³⁸ The Irish poet Desmond O'Grady called Pound 'the most influential translator of poetry of our century'.³⁹

In terms of influence, the second part of Auden's encomium, the breaking of the pentameter via the alliterative line, is better known and more widely practiced in modern poetry than the composition of sestinas. Inevitably, Pound's source for the technique is traced back to the Anglo-Saxon period, ca. seventh to ninth century. Nicholas Howe, in his article 'Praise and Lament: The Afterlife of Old English Poetry in Auden, Hill, and Gunn', quotes Tom Gunn on Donald Hall's poetry: 'It is written in a line based on the Old English accentual line as it was loosened and revised by Pound, one of the most useful and flexible technical innovations of the century'.⁴⁰ But the Old English alliterative line was loosened long before Pound, in the Middle English alliterative revival. Pound experimented with the fourteenth century alliterative and rhymed *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in his 1911 Arnaut Daniel translations, most obviously III. 'Can chai la feuilla' ('When sere leaf falleth'), where the color was expanded from *revedir* ('grow green', l. 12), to green and gold, and the Provençal *Pontremble* was written 'Pontrangle', to link it to the 'Pentangle' heraldic device of the Green Knight (l. 38). This text is a standard part of the university canon now, but the alliterative text Pound preferred in his 1917 revisions, Gavin Douglas' *Eneados*, is very rarely studied. Howe, to show conflation of an Anglo-Saxon with a modern image, quoted a description of a motorcycle gang in metallic corslets in Gunn's 'The Byrnies'. 'Byrnie on byrnie! as they turned/They saw light trapped between the man-made joints,/Central in every link it burned,/Reduced and steadied to a thousand points'.⁴¹ Anachronistic conflation is far more obvious in the later Middle Ages, when the tribal Welshman Arthur vs. the invading Anglo-Saxons is turned into

³⁸ ALDINGTON, *Fifteen Joys*, 50, 143. Fuller discussion is in WARD, 'Aldington and Pound: Partners in Translation'.

³⁹ O'GRADY, 'Ezra Pound and Creative Translation'.

⁴⁰ GUNN, *Shelf Life*, 98; HOWE, 'Praise and Lament', 296.

⁴¹ GUNN, 'The Man with Nightsweats' (1992), *Collected Poems*, stanza 106, 490; HOWE, 'Praise and Lament', 304.

a feudal Englishman in fashionable French armor, when shepherds of the Wakefield drama cycle swear by Christ's wounds before they reach the babe, and where Douglas' Dido in her grief at Æneas' departure tears her wimple. The key word 'byrnie' also occurs in Douglas' neglected translation of Virgil: 'He in his breist playt strang and his *byrnie*', (Book VII, Chapter XI, l. 5, 127).

Auden's alliterative translation of the Old Norse *Elder Edda* in conjunction with Paul B. Taylor is part of the Anglo-Saxon alliterative *stabreim* tradition, but being written down in the later Middle Ages has already taken up strophic forms and end-stopped lines. Howe cites Auden's supposedly Anglo-Saxon-inspired 'The Wanderer': 'Doom is dark and deeper than any sea-dingle'. The article by Morton Bloomfield proving the beginning line was taken from the Middle English prose homily 'Sawles Ward' is relegated to a footnote. The message of Auden's poem is the opposite of the Anglo-Saxon poem. Like Tennyson's 'Ulysses,' his *wanderlust* is never quelled:

There head fällt förward, fätigued at evening,
And dreams of home,
Waving from window, spread of wélcome,
Kissing of wife under single sheet;
But waking sees
Bird-flocks nameless to him through doorway voices
Of new mén máking another love.⁴²

The rhymes of the second and third lines are not Anglo-Saxon, either. Howe does relate Auden's satire 'The Orators' to the Middle English 'Winner and Waster'. The scatological lines he quotes: 'Béethameer, Béethamer, búlly of Britain,/With your face as fát as a fármer's bum;/ Though you póse in prívate as a pláyful kitten/Though the públic you póison are prétty well dumb', are more in the vein of the Scottish Chaucerian 'Flyting of Dunbar and Kennedie', and the rhymes are also therein: 'Thocht thow did first sic fôly to my fynd,/Thow sall agane with ma witnes than I;/Thy gúlsoch gáne dois on thy báck it bind,/Thy hóst and híppis lattis nevir thy hós go dry'.⁴³

⁴² AUDEN, *Collected Shorter Poem*, stanza 2, 51; HOWE, 'Praise and Lament', 297, footnote 23.

⁴³ *Poems of William Dunbar*, ed. MacKenzie, ll. 197-200, 11: 'Though thou didst first such folly in me find,/Thou shalt again with more witness than I;/Thy yellow-sick face does on thy back itself bind,/Thy coughing hips let never thy hose go dry'; HOWE, 'Praise and Lament', 297; *English Auden*, 86.

Howe mentions several additional twentieth century poets who use alliteration. Richard Wilbur's poem 'Beowulf' is rejected because of its rhymes, but Wilbur's poem 'Junk', which begins with a quote from the Anglo-Saxon poem 'Waldere' about Weyland the Smith, is one of the purer examples of Anglo-Saxon metrical re-creation. However, it should be noted that some of the lines do not fit Sievers' types, because the second half-line is heavier than the first, and there is sometimes internal rhyme: 'And the blistering páint péel off in pátches,/That the góod *gráin* be discovered *agáin*'.⁴⁴ David Jones is said to derive his meter from Anglo-Saxon, whereas Jones himself cites the earliest Welsh epic poem, *The Gododdin*, which has a different system, allowing more than one alliterating sound per line, alliteration carried to another line, and patterns of internal rhyme as well: 'brightning the díversity of textures and crystal-bright on the/déli-cate fret the clear déw-dróps *gleam*: so was his dáppling and/his dréadful variety/the speckled lord of Prydain/in his twice-embroidered coat/the bleeding man in the *green*'. Gerard Manley Hopkins' Welsh-inspired 'dápplé-dáwn-dráwn falcon' and 'Glóry be to Gód for dappled things', plus the Welsh word for 'Britain', are recognizable.⁴⁵ The multiple alliterating consonants and rhyme are to be found in Middle English alliterative works such as those of the Scottish Chaucerians Douglas and Dunbar as well.

A final example of a poet-translator who visited Pound in St. Elizabeth's Hospital is Robert Lowell. Pound's March 31, 1956, letter to Professor Norman Holmes Pearson at Yale records such a visit. There is an unpublished fragment called 'Beowulf' among Lowell's papers at Houghton Library, Harvard. In a conversation at Harvard in 1977, Lowell told me his choice of authors within *Imitations* had been influenced by Pound. The fifteenth century French poet Villon was no surprise, but the thirteenth century Middle High German poet Der Wilde Alexander is much rarer. Lowell said Walther von der Vogelweide was one of Pound's favorite poets, and later I published Pound's translations of 'Solt Ich den Pfaffen Râten an den Triuwen Mîn' ('If the prelates would take some honest advice from me') and 'Künc Constantin der Gap sô Vil' ('King Constantine, as

⁴⁴ HOWE, 'Praise and Lament', 296; WILBUR, *Advice to a Prophet*, ll. 50-53.

⁴⁵ JONES, 'The Hunt' ll. 18-23, 68, *Sleeping Lord*; a succinct summary in English of the Welsh alliterative system can be found in PARRY, *History of Welsh Literature*, 121-26; HOWE, 'Praise and Lament', 296; HOPKINS, 'The Windhover', l. 2, 'Pied Beauty', l. 1.

I will relate, / Bestowed a whole lot on the Holy See',) in *Iowa Review*, 12.1 (Winter 1981), 48–49, collected in the book *Forked Branches*. Ford Madox Ford, critical of Pound's archaisms, would have approved the plain speech of these poems. Pound must have been translating Arthur Rimbaud's 'Les Chercheuses de poux' ('The Lice-Hunters') when he came in contact with Lowell, because it was published soon after in the Australian periodical *Edge*, 1 (October 1956), 3. Pound's version has slang, rhymed couplets, and some alliteration: 'When the kid's forehead is full of red torments / Imploring swarms of dreams with vague contents'.⁴⁶ Lowell's version seems to have been filtered through the dream vision of Gavin Douglas' *Palice of Honour*, cited earlier in relation to Peter Whigham, more fantastical and even more alliterative: 'The child, feverish, frowning, saw only red / finally, and begged the fairies for his life'.⁴⁷

The rejection of Petrarch

Having established at length what models Pound advocated for the rejuvenation of modern poetry, it is appropriate to note what he rejected from the past. Among unpublished papers at Yale University I found a translation of Petrarch's 'Quel Vago Impallidir' and published it for the first time in *Antaeus*, 44 (1982), 30. It was unexpected because as Wilhelm rightly says, 'Pound's hatred of Petrarch is almost legendary'.⁴⁸ In his book *The Spirit of Romance*, Pound said in 1910, 'Petrarch refines but deenergizes'. In a 1929 footnote he added, 'No, he doesn't even refine, he oils and smooths over the idiom. As far as any question of actual fineness of emotion or cadence or perception he is miles behind Ventadorn or Arnaut Daniel'.⁴⁹ In a 1921 article on the Spanish Renaissance poet Quevedo, he called Petrarch decadent.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, he knew Petrarch was too influential to be totally ignored, because he included Petrarch in an essential reading list he sent his friend Carlo Linati in a letter of June 6,

⁴⁶ *Oeuvres poétiques d'Arthur Rimbaud*, ll. 1–2, 87: 'Quand le front de l'enfant, plein de rouges tourmentes, / Implore l'essaim blanc des rêves indistincts'.

⁴⁷ LOWELL, *Imitations*, 91.

⁴⁸ WILHELM, 'Arnaut Daniel's Legacy to Dante and to Pound', 75.

⁴⁹ POUND, *Spirit of Romance*, 166.

⁵⁰ POUND, 'Some Notes on Francisco de Quevedo Villegas', in *Hermes*, 5.69 (March 1921), 199–213.

1925 (Yale). That same year he instructed his mother to throw away a number of undergraduate textbooks, including *Le Rime Francesco Petrarca*, so this piece probably dates to 1905–8. In a 1931 article, Pound deemed Petrarch ‘of second or third intensity’.⁵¹

This Petrarch translation is very much under the influence of Pre-Raphaelites and the Celtic Revival. The original Italian rhyme-scheme has been preserved, as Dante Gabriel Rossetti had done in his Italian sonnet translations, in contrast to the usual English practice of converting to the Shakespearean sonnet ending in a couplet. Diction of the Renaissance King James Version of the Bible is typical of the Pre-Raphaelites, as in the first line, ‘That pallorous desire which *thy* sweet laughter’, as well as the addition of a visual image in the third line, ‘With such sadness in my heart *keeps trist*’, for the Italian *s’offerse*. The second line, ‘Hideth beneath an amorous frail *mist*’, is typical of the Celtic Twilight. Pound would later seek and obtain the post of personal secretary to William Butler Yeats at the height of the latter’s Symbolist period. The handwritten, hand-bound ‘Hilda’s Book’ for H.D., to whom Pound was engaged secretly between 1905–7, has the sonnet ‘Era Venuta’, which reads, ‘Yea sometimes in a dusty man-filled place/Meseemeth somewise thy hair wandereth/Across my eyes as *mist* that halloweth/My sight and shutteth out the world’s disgrace’.⁵² The title was changed to ‘Comraderie’ and many lines altered in Pound’s first published book *A Lume Spento*, 1908. In *A Quinzaine for this Yule* later that year Pound wrote, ‘Beauty should never be explained . . . as of a figure in *mist*’.⁵³

‘Pallorous desire’ worked its way into Pound’s most tantalizingly Symbolist poem, ‘The Return’, although he would soon eschew the tendency: ‘See, they return; ah, see the tentative/Movements, and the slow feet,/The trouble in the pace and the uncertain/Wavering!/. . . /Slow on the leash,/pallid the leash-men!’⁵⁴ The poem was much admired by T.S. Eliot, so that a cancelled draft of ‘Little Gidding’ at Magdalene College, Cambridge University, contains the phrase, ‘So they return’, to match Pound, changed to ‘See’.⁵⁵

⁵¹ POUND, ‘Appunti. X. Tradizione; XI. Puntini’, *L’Indice* 2.5 (March 10, 1931), 4.

⁵² POUND, in *End to Torment* by H.D. [Hilda Doolittle], ll. 5–8, 81.

⁵³ POUND, *Quinzaine*, opening; *Collected Early Poems*, ed. King, 58.

⁵⁴ POUND, *Personae*, 74; *Collected Early Poems*, 198, ll. 1–4, 19–20.

⁵⁵ BENNETT, ‘“Little Gidding”: a Poem of Pentecost’, *The Ampleforth Journal*, 79.1 (Spring 1974), 73; *Complete Poems and Plays of T.S. Eliot*, V. 1.18, 197.

The text printed alongside in *Forked Branches* was an Aldine edition rather than a modern critical text. We know that Pound owned an Aldine edition from the famous early Venetian printer. He had left it at Brunnenberg, the castle home of his daughter in Northern Italy, according to a 1959 letter to Professor Norman Holmes Pearson at Yale. Pound preferred other old books that remained to be discovered.

What this juvenile translation proves is that Pound's rejection of Petrarch when he came to formulate the tenets of a concrete and terse Modernism was not based on ignorance. He had grappled with the enemy by translating him. The translations of Cavalcanti proved he had not rejected the sonnet form, only the rhetorical wordiness of Petrarch. The style preceding Petrarch's influence seemed more definite in its imagery, more original in its metrical line, harder in its sounds, less predictable in its dramatic development.

The flourishing of vernacular literature scarcely received the great coverage it deserved in Pound's time, later in Haskins' pioneering study *The Twelfth Century Renaissance*, or even now among scholars of the Modernist movement in the twentieth century. Pound would have been enthusiastic about the perimeters of this volume, twelfth to sixteenth centuries, because that represented the core of his inspiration. Recognizing the role of literary translation in the development of humanism then, he sought a neglected translation of the *Æneid* by Gavin Douglas as stylistic model for the difficult troubadour Arnaut Daniel. Later poet-translators trying to learn from Pound absorbed the freer alliterative line from Gavin Douglas and other medieval texts, but not exclusively earlier Anglo-Saxon texts. Many were inspired by forms that did not require strict rhyme-schemes, such as the sestina form invented by Arnaut Daniel. Our Romantic ideals of poetic originality have caused us to ignore the role of earlier models in modern poetry. But among the poets themselves these humanistic models continue to thrive, in ever new application.

Appendix

Ezra Pound, 'Langue d'Oc', *Little Review* 5.1 (May 1918)

I

*Compleynt of a gentleman who has been waiting
outside for some time*

O PLASMATOUR and true celestial light,
Lord powerful, engirdlèd all with might,
Give my good-fellow aid in fools' despite
Who stirs not forth this night,

And day comes on.

"Sst! my good fellow, art awake or sleeping?
Sleep thou no more. I see the star upleaping
That hath the dawn in keeping,

And day comes on!

"Hi Harry, hear me, for I sing aright
Sleep not thou now, I hear the bird in flight
That plaineth of the going of the night,

And day comes on!

"Come now! Old swenkin! Rise up from thy bed,
I see the signs upon the welkin spread,
If thou come not, the cost be on thy head.

And day comes on!

"And here I am since going down of sun,
And pray to God that is St. Mary's son,
To bring thee safe back, my companion.

And day comes on.

"And thou out here beneath the porch of stone
Badest me to see that a good watch was done,
And now thou'lt none of me, and wilt have none

Of song of mine."

(Bass voice from inside)

"Wait, my good fellow. For such joy I take
With her *venust* and noblest to my make
To hold embracèd, and will not her forsake
For yammer of the cuckold,

Though day break."

(Girart Bornello.)

II

Avril

When the springtime is sweet
 And the birds repeat
 Their new song in the leaves.
 'Tis meet
 A man go where he will.

But from where my heart is set
 No message I get;
 My heart all wakes and grieves;
 Defeat
 Or luck, I must have my fill.

Our love comes out
 Like the branch that turns about
 On the top of the hawthorne,
 With frost and hail at night
 Suffers despite
 'Till the sun come, and the green leaf on the bough.

I remember the young day
 When we set strife away,
 And she gave me such *gesning*,
 Her love and her ring;
 God grant I die not by any man's stroke
 'Till I have my hand 'neath her cloak.

I care not for their clamour
 Who have come between me and my charmer,
 For I know how words run loose,
 Big talk and little use.
 Spoilers of pleasure,
 We take their measure.

(*Guilhem de Peitieu*)

C. Ward, *Pound's Translations of Arnaut Daniel*, 3-4, 39-40, 61-62, 105-6, 123,29,86

II. *CHANSSON DOIL MOT SON PLAN E PRIM*

Chansson doil mot son plan e prim
 Farai puois que botonoill vim
 E l'aussor cim
 Son de color
 De mainta flor
 E verdeia la fuoilla,
 Eil chant eil braill
 Son a l'ombraill
 Del auzels per la bruoilla.

Pel bruoill aug lo chan el reffrim,
 E per tal que nom fassa crim
 Obre e lim
 Motz de valor
 Ab art d'Amor
 Don non ai cor quem tuoilla;
 Ans si bem fail
 La sec a traill
 On plus vas mi s'orguoilla.

Petit val orguoill d'amador
 Que leu trabucha son seignor
 Del luoc aussor
 Jus al terraill
 Per tal trebaill
 Que de joi lo despuoilla;
 Dreitz es lagrim
 Et arda e rim
 Qui 'ncontra amor janguoilla.

Ges per janguoill non vir aillor,
 Bona dompna ves cui ador;
 Mas per paor
 Del devinaill,
 Don jois trassail

Fatz semblan que nous vuoilla;
 C'anc no.us gauzim
 De lor noirim:
 Malmes, que lor acuoilla!

Si bem vau per tot a es daill,
 Mos pessamens lai vos assaill;
 Qu'ieu chat e vaill
 Pel joi quens fim
 Lai ons partim;
 Dont sovens l'uoills mi muoilla
 D'ira e de plor
 E de doussor,
 Car per joi ai quem duoilla.

Ges nom tuoill d'amor don badaill
 Ni no sec mesura ni taill;
 Sol m'o egail
 Que anc no vim
 Del temps Caim
 Amador meins acuoilla
 Cor traichador
 Ni bauzador,
 Per que mos jois capduoilla.

Bella, qui queis destuoilla,
 Amautz drech cor
 Lai ous honor,
 Car vostre pretz capduoilla.

NEW AGE AND SWIFT EDITION, 1911

I

I'll make a song with exquisite
 Clear words, for buds are blowing sweet
 Where the sprays meet,
 And flowers don
 Their bold blazon
 Where leafage springeth greenly
 O'ershadowing
 The birds that sing
 And cry in coppice seemly.

II

The bosques among they're singing fleet.
 In shame's avoid my staves compete,
 Fine-filed and neat,
 With love's glaives on
 His ways they run;
 From him no whim can turn me,
 Although he bring
 Great sorrowing,
 Although he proudly spurn me.

III

For lovers strong pride is ill won,
 And throweth him who mounts thereon.
 His lots are spun
 So that they fling
 Him staggering,
 His gaudy joys more leanly.
 He hath grief's meat
 And tears to eat
 Who useth Love unseemly.

IV

Though tongues speak wrong/wrangles none
 Can turn from thee. For but one
 Fear I have gone
 Dissembling;
 Traitors can sting,
 From their lies I would screen thee,
 And as they'd treat
 Us, with deceit,
 Let fate use them uncleanly.

V

Though my swath long's run wavering
 My thoughts go forth to thee and cling,
 Wherefore I sing
 Of joys replete

Once, where our feet
 Parted, and mine eyes plainly
 Show mists begun
 And sweetly undone,
 For joy's the pain doth burn me.

VI

Save neath Love's thong I move no thing,
 And my way brooks no measuring,
 For right hath spring
 In that Love's heat
 Was ne're complete
 As mine, since Adam. 'Tween me
 And sly treason
 No net is spun,
 Wherefore my joy grows greenly

CODA

Lady, whoe'er demean thee
 My benison
 Is set upon
 Thy grace where it moves queenly.

COPIES INTENDED FOR THE CLERK'S PRESS EDITION 1917

II. *CHANSSON DOIL MOT SON PLAN E PRIM*

A song where words run *gimp* and straight
 I'll make for buds flaunt out their state,
 And tips dilate
 With floral sheen
 Where many a green
 Leaf cometh forth for viewing,
 While 'neath dark shade
 In grass and glade
 I hear the birds are construing.

In copse I hear their chirp debate,
 And lest any man me berate

At Love's dictate
 I file and preen
 And cut words clean
 And cease not him pursuing.
 'Spite his aid
 I do not evade
 Whate'er spites he be brewing.

To lover pride's not worth a bean.
 Bad horse doth its lord demean as
 Pride showeth spleen
 Like swinger jade
 And hath low laid
 Proud man in *glastre* strewing,
 For 'tis good fate
 None miserate
 Him who 'gainst love foe's mewing.

No mew nor yape shall me *prevene*
 Nor turn me from my *walwit* queen;
 tho' for a screen
 Being afraid
 Gossips unbraid,
 I feign not to be suing
 If 'spite their prate
 Men fill their plate,
 I'd have their swift undoing.

Though waith o'er wide ways I have strayed,
 Thee always doth my thought invade.
 My song is stayed
 By joys cognate
 Ere separate
 I went, with tears bedewing
 Mine eyes; in teen
 I sing *amene*
 That joy should bring such rueing.

N'er leave I love tho' my sleep's frayed
 Me; by no measure my love's weighed.
 But have me brayed
 If since the date
 Of Cain the great

Was ere such trusty wooing
 As mine hath been;
 I am well seen
 With her; 'tis joy's renewing.

Dear, despite men's hallooing
 My heart is keen
 And I *bedene*
 Proclaim thee fame's renewing.

MS. REVISIONS TO *NEW AGE* TRANSLATIONS AND OTHER
 COPIED INTENDED FOR THE CLERK'S PRESS EDITION, 1917

II. *CHANSSON DOIL MOT SON PLAN E PRIM*

(Ms. revision, 3 typed copies with ms. and typed corrections, compared with unpublished fair copy herein, *Forked Branches* 1985)

- 1 A song where words run gimp and straight] *ms. and 1st typed* I'll make a song with exquisite, *ms. correction to 1st typed and 2nd typed and ms. correction to 3rd typed* run clear
- 2 I'll make for buds flaunt out their state,] *ms. and 1st typed* Clear words, for buds so *gustand* sweet, *2nd typed* buds come forth in state, *3rd typed* for birds
- 3 And tips dilate] *ms.* High sprays meet, *1st typed* Show where sprays meet
- 4 With floral sheen] *1st typed and ms. correction to 2nd typed* In varied sheen, *ms. correction to 1st typed* in forked sheen, When is floral seen, fake vere sheer
- 5 Where many a green] *ms.* Their gymp dear, *1st typed* While, *ms. correction* And many a green
- 6 Leaf cometh forth for viewing,] *ms.* Where the leaves springeth greenly
- 7 While 'neath dark shade] *1st typed* Where, *ms. correction* When 'neath their shade, *2nd typed* And 'neath the shade
- 8 In grass and glade] *1st and 2nd and 3rd typed* In bosque and glade
- 9 I hear the birds are construing.] *ms.* And crying in copse serenely, *1st typed* birds construing, *2nd typed* The auzels are, *3rd type* The auzels, *ms. correction* I hear the birds
- 10 In copse I hear their chirp debate,] *ms.* Among the copse they're singing fleet, *1st typed* I hear mid wood their song rise fleet, *ms. correction* song repeat

- 11 And lest any man me berate] *ms. and 1st typed* In shame's avoid
my staves compete (stave repeat)
- 12 At Love's dictate] *1st typed* Fine-filed and neat
- 13 I file and preen] *ms.* With love's gear on, *1st typed* As Love doth
preen, *ms. correction* For Love doth
- 14 And cut words clean] *1st typed* And turn them clean
- 15 And cease] *1st typed* I cease
- 16 'Spite his aid] *1st and 2nd typed* Spite his no-aid
- 17 I do not] *1st and 3rd typed* I not
- 18 What e'er spites he be brewing.] *ms.* Where loftiest he doth
spurn me, *1st typed* spite, *2nd typed* Whate'er stints
- 19 To lover pride's not worth a bean.] *ms.* For strong lovers pride
is ill won, *ms. correction to 2nd typed* To a crew of lovers
- 20 Bad horse doth its lord demean as] *ms.* And in *glastre* throws
him who mounts thereon, *1st typed* But doth, who moutheth it,
demean, *2nd typed* its rider
- 21 Pride showeth spleen] *ms.* will cavills, *1st typed* And show the
spleen, *ms. correction* showing spleen, *2nd typed* Showing its spleen,
ms. correction Its lord in spleen
- 22 Like swinger jade] *ms.* so that fling, *1st typed* Of scurvy jade, *ms.*
correction of swinger, *2nd typed* like scurvy
- 23 And hath] *1st and 2nd typed* Him hath
- 24 Proud man in glaster strewing,] *ms.* His token joys move leanly,
1st and 2nd typed In pain and *glastre*, *ms. correction* swinger fit your
grief & your meat
- 25 For 'tis good fate] *1st typed* Grief. Tears be his meat, *ms. correc-*
tion their meat, Tis right they bleat, *2nd typed* Thus 'tis, *ms. cor-*
rection And 'tis
- 26 None miserate] *1st typed.* And tears to eat, *ms. correction* & know
defeat
- 27 Him who 'gainst love's foe's mewing.] *ms.* Who entreats Love
meanly, *1st typed* Who 'gainst love lifts his mewing, *ms. correction*
lift their mewing, *2nd typed* Man who 'gainst love goes
- 28 No mew nor yape shall me] *2nd typed* No jesting shall e'er me
- 29 Nor turn me from my walwit queen;] *ms.* can turn me from
that paragon, *1st typed* or turn me from her, *2nd typed* Or turn
me from my fair colleen
- 30 Tho' for a screen] *ms.* For fear I've gone, *1st typed* But for a
screen, *ms. correction* For her to screen that *venust* queen, chosen
walwit queen, *2nd typed* Yet for, *3rd typed* If for
- 32 Gossips unbraid,] *ms.* Lest traitors sting, *1st and 2nd typed* Gossip

- 33 I feign not to be suing.] *ms.* For from their lies I'd screen thee,
2nd typed her feign not
- 34 If spite there prate] *1st typed* May they who'd treat, *2nd typed*
 'Spite gibber's prate, *ms. correction* if spite gabber's, Tho spite
- 35 Men fill their plate], *1st typed* Us with deceit
- 36 I'd have their swift undoing.] *1st typed* come swift on their un-
 doing, *ms. correction* to *2nd typed* their undoing
- 37 Though waith o'er wide ways I have strayed,] *ms.* Though my
 track long's run wavering, *1st and 2nd typed* Though wild, *ms.*
correction Though waith wandering, *ms. correction* Tho heedless =
 guided point
- 38 my thought invade.] *1st typed correction* pervade
- 39 My song] *1st typed* Till my song, *ms. correction* & song
- 40 By joys cognate] *1st typed* By joys replete, *2nd and 3rd typed* cre-
 ate, *ms. correction* to *2nd typed* wake = joy did not fade
- 41 Ere separate] *1st typed* Once, where our feet
- 42 I went, with tears bedewing] *1st typed* Parted. Now tears, *2nd*
typed I left with tears bedewing, *ms. correction* we were tears oft
 bedewing, tears my eyes bedewing
- 43 Mine eyes; in teen] *ms.* Show plainly tears begun, *3rd typed* oft
 my eyes bedeen, But my tears, the tears, meaning & teen, *1st*
and 2nd typed My eyes for teen, *ms.* sweetly undone
- 44 I sing amene] *2nd typed* Ah tears, *3rd typed* I sing & wait, & joy
 amene
- 45 That joy should bring such rueing.] *ms. correction* to *2nd typed*
 From joy hath been my rueing, *3rd typed* From joy hast burned
 my rueing
- 46 Ne'er leave I love tho' my sleep's frayed] *1st typed* love who
 hath waylaid (bowraged), *2nd typed* love (who hath bewayed), *3rd*
typed that hath waylaid
- 47 Me; by no measure my love's weighed.] *1st typed* By no measure
 is my love weighed, *ms. correction* and love of measure unweighed,
2nd typed And by no weight, *typed correction* And all my measure
 is unweighed, my love is, *ms.* love for whom I sign in vain
- 48 But have me brayed] *1st typed* Since Cain was brayed, *ms. cor-*
rection have me brayed, *3rd typed* drayed
- 49 If since the date] *1st typed* Was we're love's heat, *typed correction*
 If since Cain's feat, *3rd typed* That my joy backshelves
- 50 Of Cain the great] *1st typed* As mine complete, *typed correction*
 was ere love's heat, *2nd typed* left, I went late, & sing & wait

- 51 Was ere such trusty wooing] *ms.* As mine, since Cain's time *1st typed* Was ever, *ms. correction* Or e'er such trusty wooing, or trusty
 53 I am well seen] *ms. correction* to *1st typed* Since Cain was seen
 54 With her; 'Tis joy's renewing.] *ms. correction* to *1st typed* She is
 my joy, *ms. correction* to *2nd typed* out doing
 55 Dear, despite men's hallooming] *ms.* Lady, who e'er misdeam thee
 58 Proclaim thee fame's renewing.] *ms.* Thee where thou moveth,
1st typed With her 'tis joy's renewing

REVISIONS TO THE *NEW AGE* TRANSLATIONS AND OTHER
 COPIES INTENDED FOR THE CLERK'S PRESS EDITON,
 1917

II. CHANSSON DOIL MOT SON PLAN E PRIM

(Ca. 1917. First published *Forked Branches* 1985)

- 1 *gimp* ("neat"), *cf.* Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book VI, Chapter X, p. 53, l. 3: "Now with gymp fingeris doing stringis smyte," *The Poetical Works of Gavin Douglas*, ed. John Small (Edinburgh: William Pettersson, 1874; reprinted Hildesheim and New York: George Olms, 1970). l. 5 variant also.
- 2 *gustand* ("smelling"), unpublished variant, *cf.* Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book XI, Chapter III, p. 19, l. 28: "The strang gustand cedyr is all to schyde."
- 9 *auzels* ("birds"), unpublished variant, used in "XII. Doutz brais e critz," is a Provençal word.
- 11 *stave repeat*, unpublished variant, follows Lavaud's translation "refrain."
- 20 *glastre* ("barks"), unpublished variant used l. 24 *cf.* Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book VIII, Prologue, p. 143, l. 26: "Sum glasteris, and thai gang at all for gayt woll;"
- 21 *cavills* ("lot"), unpublished variant, *cf.* Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book I, Chapter VIII, p. 50, l. 19: "Be cut or cavil that pleid sone partid was," used in "XIV. Amors e jois e liocs e terms," l. 34, also "III. Can chai la fueilla."
- 22 *swinger* ("sluggard"), *cf.* Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book VIII, Prologue, p. 144, l. 16: "Swingeouris and scurrevagis, swankeis and swanis."
- 24 *glastre*, see l. 20

- 28 *prevene* ("occupy"), cf. Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book I, Chapter XI, p. 63, l. 11: "Can hir dolf spreit for to prevene and steir."
- 29 *walwit* ("bewailed"), cf. Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book III, Chapter V, p. 138, l. 12: "And walit wo that pietie was to heir." Unpublished variant *fair coleen*, an Irish expression, is an analogy discussed more fully under "XVII. Sim for amors de joi donar tant larga."
- 30 *venust* ("beautiful"), cf. Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book XII, Prologue, p. 82, l. 31: "The variant vestur of the venust vaill." Though an unpublished variant in this song, it was published in the translation of the alba "En vergier soz fuella d'albespi," l. 26, as part of the "Langue d'Oc" sequence IV. *Little Review* 5, pt. 1 (May 1918): 18: "*Venust* the lady, and none lovelier." McDougal (and Apter in his wake) thought Pound had invented this archaism, "A Parnassian in Provence," University of Pennsylvania Ph.D. thesis, 1970, p. 153. "*Plasmatour*," l. 6, in the alba translation is also from Gavin Douglas, not an invention on the part of Pound. Both occur in the Girart Bornello, l. 1 and 27.
- 32 *gossips* for "devinail" accepts Raynouard's "medisance," rejected by Levy and Lavaud, but quoted in the latter's edition, used by Pound
- 37 *waith* ("wandering") cf. Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book VI, Prologue, p. 3, l. 24: "Thai aucht nocht be hald wagabound nor waith."
- 43 *bedeen* ("immediately"), unpublished variant, cf. Gavin Douglas, *Eneados*, Book I, Chapter II, p. 26, l. 13: "Warp all thair bodyis in the deip bedene," used l. 57 and "XIII. Er vei vermeills, vertz, blaus groucs."
- 44 *amene* ("pleasant"), cf. Gavin Douglas, "The Palice of Honour," Prologue, p. 2, l. 23: "Quhais amene heit is maist restoratiue."

XVIII. LO FERM VOLER QU'EL COR M'INTRA

Lo ferm voler qu'el cor m'intra
 Nom pot jes becs escoissendre ni ongla
 De lausengier qui pert per mal dir s'arma;
 E car non l'aus batr'ab ram ni verga
 Sivals a frau lai on non aurai oncle
 Jauzirai joi en vergier o dinz cambra.

Quan mi soven de la cambra
 On a mon dan sai que nuills hom non intra,

Anz me son tuich plus que fraire ni oncle,
 Non ai membre nom fremisca ni on gla,
 Aissi cum fai l'enfas denant la verga:
 Tal paor ai nol sia prop de l'arma.

Del cors li fos, non de l'arma,
 E cossentis m'a celat dinz sa cambra!
 Que plus mi nafra cor que colps de verga
 Car lo sieus sers lai on ill es non intra;
 Totz temps serai ab lieis cum carns et on gla
 E non creirai chastic d'amic ni d'oncle.

Anc la seror de mon oncle
 Non amei plus ni tant, per aquest'arma!
 C'ataint vezis cum es lo detz de l'on gla,
 S'a lei plagues, volgr'esser de sa cambra;
 De mi por far l'amors qu'inz el cor m'intra
 Mieills a son vol c'om fortz de frevol verga.

Pois flori la seca verga
 Ni d'en Adam mogron nebot ni oncle,
 Tant fina amors cun cella qu'el cor m'intra
 Non cuig fos anc en cors, non eis en arma;
 On qu'ill estei, fors en plaza o dinz cambra,
 Mos cors nois part de lieis tant cum ten l'on gla.

C'aissi s'enpren e s'enongla
 Mos cors en lei cum l'escorssa en la verga;
 Qu'ill m'es de joi tors e palaitz e cambra,
 E non am tant fraire, paren ni oncle:
 Qu'en paradis n'aura doble joi m'arma
 Si ja nuills hom per ben amar lai intra.

Arnautz tramet sa chansson d'on gla e d'oncle,
 A grat de lieis que de sa verg'a l'arma,
 Son Desirat, cui pretz en cambra intra.

SESTINA: XVIII. LO FERM VOLER QU'EL COR M'INTRA

The firm wishing that gets ingress
 To my heart fears no cad's beak or nail-tip
 Of cad who by false speech doth lose his soul's hope,
 And if I dare assail him not with bough or osier

On quiet I, where one admits no uncle,
Will get my joy in garden or in bower.

When I remember the bower
Where to my spite I know that no man gets ingress,
But do no more than may brothers and uncles,
I tremble all length, all save my nail-tips,
As does a child before a switch of osier,
So fear I lest I come not near my soul's hope.

Of body 'twas not of soul's hope
That consenting she hid me in her bower.
Now it hurts my heart worse than strokes of osiers
That where she now is, her slave gets no ingress.
I cling mam to her as is the flesh to the nail-tip
And take warning of neither friend nor uncle.

Ne'er love I sister of uncle
As I love her I love, by my soul's hope.
Close cling I as doth the finger to nail-tip
And would be, and it please her, in her bower;
Love that in my heart gets ingress
Can shake me, as strong man not an osier.

Since flower sprang on dry osier,
Since Adam began this line of nephews and uncles,
Such fine love as to my heart hath ingress
Was not to my belief in body or soul's hope.
If she be in piazza nor bower,
My heart leave not by a nail-tip.

The heart roots and clings like the nail-tip
Or as the bark clings that clings to the osier,
For she is joy's palace, she is joy's bower
Nor love I so father, nor kinsman, nor kind uncle.
Double joy in Paradise, by my soul's hope,
Shall I have if ere true love there win ingress.

Arnaut sends the song of nail and uncle
With thanks to her the soul of his osier,
Son Dezirat, who to some purpose hath ingress in bower.

C. Ward, *Ezra Pound, Forked Branches: Translations of Medieval Poems*

Petrarch

QUEL VAGO IMPALLIDIR

Quel uago impallidir, ch'el dolce riso
 D'un'amorosa nebbia ricoperse,
 Con tanta maiestade al cor s'offerse;
 Che li si fece incontr'a mezzo'l uiso.
 Conobbi allor, si come in paradiso
 Vede l'un l'altro; in tal guisa s'aperse
 Quel pietoso pensier, ch'altsi non scerse:
 Ma uidil'io, ch'altroue non m'affiso.
 Ogni angelica uista, ogni atto humile;
 Che giamai in donna, ou'amor fosse apparue;
 Fora uno sdegno a lato a quel, ch'i dico.
 Chinaua a terra il bel guardo gentile;
 Et tacendo dicea, com'a me parue,
 Chi m'allontana il mio fedele amico?

QUEL VAGO IMPALLIDIR

That pallorous desire which thy sweet laughter
 Hideth beneath an amorous frail mist
 With such sadness in my heart keeps trist
 As makes him stand before my face. Thereafter
 I was made certain how in Paradise
 One sees another and what wise is shown.
 That piteous thought to no one else made known,
 Yea I have seen it, in naught else made wise
 All humble acts and ways angelical
 Which come unto a woman where love dwells
 Were one disdain 'gainst her nobility,
 When toward the ground her gracious glances fall
 And seem to ask by silence and naught else
 What power'd suffice to hold my love from me?

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